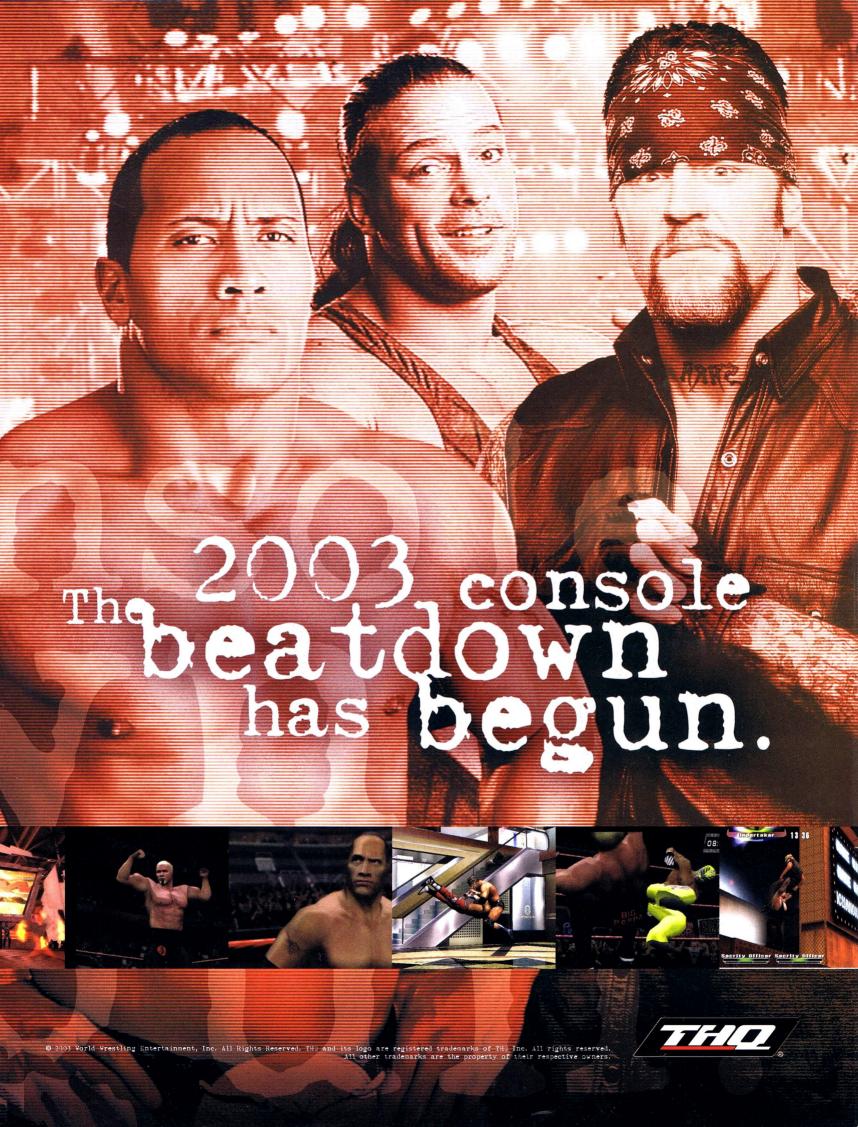








The Only Official WWE Video Games





# OFFICIAL AUSTRALIAN XBOX MAGAZINE

#### **OFFICIAL**

>> THE BEST XBOX NEWS AND REVIEWS

#### **PLAYABLE**

>>> THE EXCLUSIVE SOURCE FOR PLAYABLE XBOX DEMOS

#### FIRST

>>> NEWS, PREVIEWS & REVIEWS BEFORE ANYONE ELSE

#### WHAT'S IN IT FOR YOU

>>> THE OFFICIAL Australian Xbox Magazine is written by a group of experienced gamers who've spent their lives playing games. We believe that games are the most exciting form of entertainment there is. This magazine will reflect that at all times.

>>> WE BELIEVE THAT the arrival of Xbox represents one of the most important developments in video games. Xbox will not 'kill' the PS2 or GameCube - and as gamers we wouldn't want it to. However, the power and technological innovation offered by Microsoft's new machine will result in better games and more choice for Xbox owners.

>>> BEING THE OFFICIAL Australian Xbox Magazine means that we are in the best position to give impartial, honest review scores. We don't do any deals to get access to finished games. As a result, we're in the best possible position to give you what you deserve - balanced, objective and accurate reviews on which to base your buying decisions.

>>> MICROSOFT HAS no access to, or influence over, the Official Australian Xbox Magazine. The company's involvement ends once it has made available to us materials we need for the magazine, and it will only read our reviews when you do.

>>> HOWEVER, BECAUSE we are the official magazine, we have unprecedented access to the newest Xbox games in development and the people making them. Our coverage of forthcoming titles will take you closer than ever before to the most exciting new games. We will talk to the developers and publish the best new screenshots before anyone else.

>>> OUR OFFICIAL STATUS allows us to get closer to every Xbox story, rooting out the truth from the rumours and speculation. Because we can go directly to the people involved, you can be assured that every story in the magazine will be accurate and truthful.

>>> THE OFFICIAL AUSTRALIAN XBOX MAGAZINE is part of a huge network of games journalists across the globe, ready to visit games developers wherever they are and report exclusively for the Official Xbox Magazine World Network.

>>> WE BELIEVE that the readers of the Official Australian Xbox Magazine are one of our most important assets. While it's our job to provide you with the demos, news, previews and reviews you need, we want to be a place where your opinions and expertise can be shared with the new Xbox community.



# Don't just buy anything

T'S THAT TIME of the year again - that time for family gatherings, backyard barbecues, guilt-free feasting, lazy summer days on the beach - Aussie Christmases are simply the best. It's also the time when, if you'll believe the marketing execs, people are most likely to buy video games. That's why this Christmas will see the release of over 400 games across all gaming platforms. It's a staggering figure by any standard - more than one game for each day of the year - and they're all fighting for a portion of your Christmas savings.

Whether you're buying games as a present for yourself or a loved one, the question that's most commonly asked of us is "which one should I get?" Well, if you're a regular reader of this magazine, you shouldn't have too many problems. You'll know that the best games to buy aren't necessarily the ones that are rated highly, but the ones that suit your particular tastes. Some people like racing games, other people loathe RPGs - it's just like a person's preference for movies.

And that's exactly what I tell the people who ask "what game should I get for my son/grandson/nephew/daughter/niece/friend?" Ask them what kind of game they like. Have a look at their existing collection of games – that'll give you a good idea of what they'd like. And if it all still seems too much for you, our Christmas shopping guide at page 046 will do all the work for you, recommending the top picks from every genre.

This issue of the Official Australian Xbox is quite a special one. Aside from being our biggest issue yet (we've tacked on an extra 16 pages), this Christmas edition comes with Australia's exclusive review AND playable demo of *Project Gotham Racing 2*. We're also pleased to bring you Australia's first official confirmation that *Grand Theft Auto 3* and *Vice City* - the two games we get asked about most this side of *Halo 2* - will indeed be coming to Xbox. It's slated for a January 2004 release, so be sure to put away a little of that Christmas cash for it. Ah, life is grand.

Happy gaming.

IN THIS ISSUE

GRAND THEFT AUTO
Crime spree at page 052!

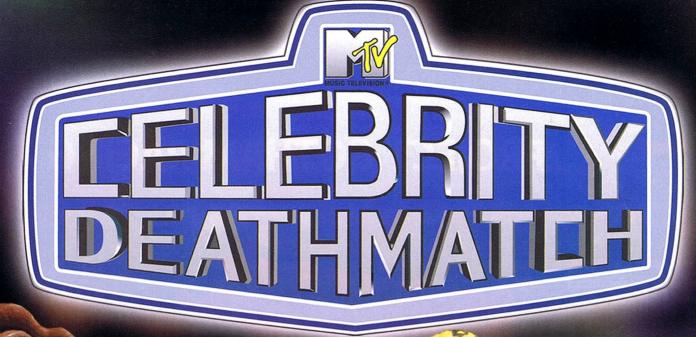
CHRISTMAS PICKS
Top games at page 046.

PROJECT GOTHAM 2
Full review at page 062

RAINBOW SIX 3 Clancy action: page 066.

KEVIN CHEUNG

EDITOR, OFFICIAL AUSTRALIAN XBOX MAGAZINE















PlayStation<sub>®</sub>2



PC CD ROM





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# The Sall



#### ON THE DISC

HEADLINING THIS issue's crammed disc is the ultra-realistic Project Gotham Racing 2, which we've specially tied in with our official review at page 062. Go for a spin on the three available game modes and three alluring motors vehicles, then saddle up with Metal Arms' Glitch and friends in a shoot 'em up adventure to remember. After that, why not explore a sizeable chunk of Paris in Midtown Madness 3? It's turning out to be quite popular on Xbox Live, and the free-wheeling nature of the game has a lot to do with it. Then try Kao the Kangaroo 2 - a brand new platform adventure game with an obvious Australian flavour; and Disney's Extreme Skate Adventure is brilliant for young guns too. It's built on the Tony Hawk 4 engine, so you know it's going to be good. Also featured on this month's demo disc are SSX 3 and ESPN NHL Hockey 2K4, which you'll be able to play for the first time. All this fantastic gaming action is rounded off nicely with Magic: The Gathering - Battlegrounds. It's a strategy title brimming with fantasy monsters. So go on then, play:more!

# **PROJECT GOTHAM RACING 2**



↑ Try out the demo on our disc, then read our official review at page 062!

**GAME INFORMATION** 

REVIEWED: THIS ISSUE, PAGE 062

SCORE: 9.3

**DEMO PLAYERS: 1** 

#### **What You Get**

Three tyre-shredding game modes - Street Racing, Timed Run and Cone Challenge. There's a trio of cars too - Nissan Skyline GT-R, Ferrari 246 Dino and Pontiac Trans AM.

#### What You Do

Battle against five roadsters in a two-lap Street Race and try to place in the top three. Timed Run mode gives you a rolling start and a lap of the Florence Duomo 2 circuit. The Cone Challenge puts you at the wheel of a Pontiac Trans AM - finish without hitting any obstacles.

#### **Top Tips**

PGR2 rewards you with Kudos points for skilful driving. Apart from your time and position, driving techniques like sliding,



↑ Perfect those powerslides!

drafting and hitting the perfect race line will earn you Kudos. On the Cone Challenge, you'll be rewarded with more bonus points if you can execute a flawless run.

#### **Anything Else?**

String driving moves together to earn a generous Kudos combo bonus at the end of the race. However, you'll lose all your combo points if you bump into an object before the score has registered, so don't be careless about it! A 'whoosh' sound indicates your points have been successfully banked.



♠ You won't believe how gorgeous these cars look!

# **MIDTOWN MADNESS 3**



↑ The Xbox controller is your gateway to the Official Australian Xbox Magazine Game Disc. Use the directional pad or left thumbstick to highlight the menus in the righthand window and press the A button to select. The B button returns you to the previous menu and the White button zooms in for an extreme close-up of the screen.

GAME INFORMATION

**REVIEWED: ISSUE 18** 

SCORE: 7.3

**DEMO PLAYERS: 1** 

#### **What You Get**

Where better to demonstrate that television shows like World's Worst Drivers don't have anything you your driving skills? And you'll get to flaunt your worst driving in the city of romance, too! You have six loopy races and a massive chunk of gay Paris to explore.

#### What You Do

There are three game modes in this demo. Checkpoint Races are against five other drivers through a series of markers. Blitz Races have a punishing time limit to work

against, while Cruise mode lets you tour the city under your own steam.

#### Top Tips

Having trouble completing the Checkpoint Races? You don't need to take the suggested route. Try working out a quicker route between the markers and you won't have to worry about crashing or being overtaken by other cars.

#### **Anything Else?**

There are two vehicles to choose from in this demo - the popular New Beetle RSI and a chunky



♠ Faster and funnier

ambulance. Your opponents will always choose the same vehicle as you, so it could be easier (and slower) to start off using the ambulance. Hop inside the Beetle if you want a faster and funnier competition.



STAR WARS JEDI KNIGHT: JEDI ACADEMY

This time, Luke Skywalker himself will train you in the ways of the

Force. Hot footage inside!

# SSX3

GAME INFORMATION

**REVIEWED: NEXT ISSUE** 

SCORF: TRA

**DEMO PLAYERS: 1** 

#### **What You Get**

Two boarders on a mountain full of glorious, powdery snow. Complete a run down the slope and challenge five opponents to a high-scoring race. Make sure you do plenty of sick tricks to score big.

#### What You Do

Hotfoot it down the slope and pull off as many grabs, handplants and flips as you possibly can. Find all the slops and ramps where you can get some phat air, too. There's a race that you have to meet halfway down the slope and you don't want to miss out on it.



↑ Dude, these fireworks are totally phat!

**Top Tips**The Super Uber bar on the right of the screen fills up as you bust moves and land them well. Fill it up and execute sick mid-air specials by pressing L and Y together. Hit L and B to pull off a rail slide.

Anything Else?
If it looks like you're going to crater, tap the X button mid-leap to recover and land the right way up. The same technique works if you've landed headfirst in the snow. Keep tapping X to stand upright more quickly.

## SECRET WEAPONS OVER NORMANDY

First it's Medal of Honor, then it'll be Call of Duty - it's like everyone wants a piece of the WWII action!



#### MAFIA



This adventure game set in the criminal underworld was a sleeper hit on PC.

#### FORD RACING EVOLUTION

Like Lotus and Mercedes Benz, Ford has an illustrious motoring history worth putting in a game.



# **ESPN NHL 2K4**

**GAME INFORMATION** 

**REVIEWED: ISSUE 21** 

SCORE: 7.9

**DEMO PLAYERS: 1** 

#### **What You Get**

This demo comes with over 20 different teams from the National Hockey League. That's more rock-hard players than you can shake a hockey stick at. These teams can be pitched at each other for a single period.

#### **What You Do**

You only have one period to play through, so make sure your goals go flying in thick and fast. Use the X button to shoot for goal. The longer you hold the X button



↑ Making a clean break.

down, the more powerful your swing will be. Less power means a softer touch will be applied to the shot. The Y button dumps the puck and A passes it to another player.

#### **Top Tips**

A new feature is the use of the Right thumbstick to execute special moves. Pressing diagonally up/left or up/right performs an accurate deke. Press left or right to perform a clever sidestep, and down to stop.

#### **Anything Else?**

Ice hockey just wouldn't be so popular to the mainstream if it wasn't for the odd bit of biffo. To initiate a fight, check the same player over and over to bait him into causing a brawl. When you're in Fight mode, press the A button to duck and avoid his blows. Press the B button to grab your opponent, and then the X button to lay in a few punches where it hurts.

## **KAO THE KANGAROO 2**

**GAME INFORMATION** 

**REVIEWED: COMING SOON** 

SCORE: TRA

**DEMO PLAYERS: 1** 

#### **What You Get**

One complete level of this Down Under adventure game. This game sees the yellow antipodean helping out a nutty beaver.

#### What You Do

Everything would be quiet in the forest if it wasn't for the stampeding badgers, hammer-wielding dwarves and a giant copyright-infringing Piranha Plant. Help the squirrels return things to normal and free their leader from captivity.

Kao has more fighting skills than Ivan Drago. Press B three times to produce a 1-2-3 combo. Press

**Anything Else?** 

Break all the crates, pots and barrels to find coins. Some barrels contain booby traps, so remain at a safe distance.

it mid-jump for a cutting tail

mid-jump to execute a stomp.

spin or hit the X button



↑ He needs help finding the dentist.

# **METAL ARMS: GLITCH IN THE SYSTEM**

GAME INFORMATION

REVIEWED: NEXT ISSUE

SCORE: TBA

**DEMO PLAYERS: 1** 

#### **What You Get**

Join atomic robokid Glitch and his two companions for one explosive adventure. This demo comes with one complete mission that takes you right into the heart of General Corrosive's fortress city.

#### **What You Do**

Your objective is very simple: to venture through the giant metal metropolis and stow away in the cargo loader at the end. Hundreds of evil Mil bots stand between you and victory. Don't think about counting on your friends to back you up in the field of battle, because they'll very

likely be reduced to scrap metal even before the first assault is over. In this battle, you'll probably be better off figuring out how to get by on your own.

#### **Top Tips**

Like all good robots, Glitch carries both a primary and secondary weapon. Some of them can be combined together to make an even more devastating attack. Use grenades in together with the catapult for a cool long-range explosive strike.

Alternatively, try using the sniper scope along with the Bolt Gun or Ripper to take the enemies' arms and legs clean off from long distance.

#### **Anything Else?**

Two extra special treats lie in store for you in the second half of the level. If you collect the Tether gun and shoot it into the back of a prone Mil Titan (one of



♠ Dismantle the enemy

those really big metal dudes) and possess his body, you'll be able to take him for a mega-rampage through the area. If that doesn't satisfy your thirst for destruction, climb inside a tank instead. This vehicle is armed with a grievous gun turret and a heavy machine-gun. You can even flatten Mil Grunts into pancakes underneath your caterpillar tracks.



↑ That's a painful-looking weapon...

At various points in the level, your path will be blocked by a powerful laser grid. To get through this obstacle, you have to find the laser's energy source which usually looks like a big green power generator. If you blow up these generators with a few well-aimed grenades, you'll clear the path to continue your trail of destruction.

# **MAGIC THE GATHERING: BATTLEGROUND**

**GAME INFORMATION** 

**REVIEWED: COMING SOON** 

SCORF: TBA

**DEMO PLAYERS: 1-2** 

#### **What You Get**

Five huge tutorial missions that explain the basic strategies and the ins and outs of *Magic the Gathering*. It all culminates in a battle against the ferocious force of nature, Multani. Alternatively, you can always play against a mate.

#### **What You Do**

If you cross into your opponent's half of the arena, you'll start to lose your energy. Instead, cast spells from your area and summon creatures to do all the dirty work for you.

#### Top Tips

Be sure to collect as many white mana crystals as you can get your hands on. If you see one appearing in your opponent's half of the arena, have a go at stealing it. Why? The more crystals you have, the more powerful creatures you can summon. Cast enchantments to increase your creatures' prowess.

#### **Anything Else?**

Multani will try to introduce you to your maker by sending a horde of elven warriors after you. Summon lots of Goblin Kings for your defence and help them out with the inferno spell. While Multani is busy in defence, be sure to use the opportunity to steal the white crystals. This should give you the advantage you need.



↑ As good as the card game? Play our demo and find out!

# DISNEY'S EXTREME SKATE ADVENTURE

**GAME INFORMATION** 

**REVIEWED: ISSUE 21** 

SCORE: 8.3

DEMO PLAYERS: 1

#### **What You Get**

Woody, Buzz, Mallie Ann and Ryan are shredding up Andy's Bedroom skatepark in this great demo, which is simply bursting with objectives.

#### **What You Do**

There's plenty to do. Grind dominos, handplant building blocks and manual over chessboards. Speak to the toys in the area who have a blue arrow floating over them by moving close and pressing the B button.



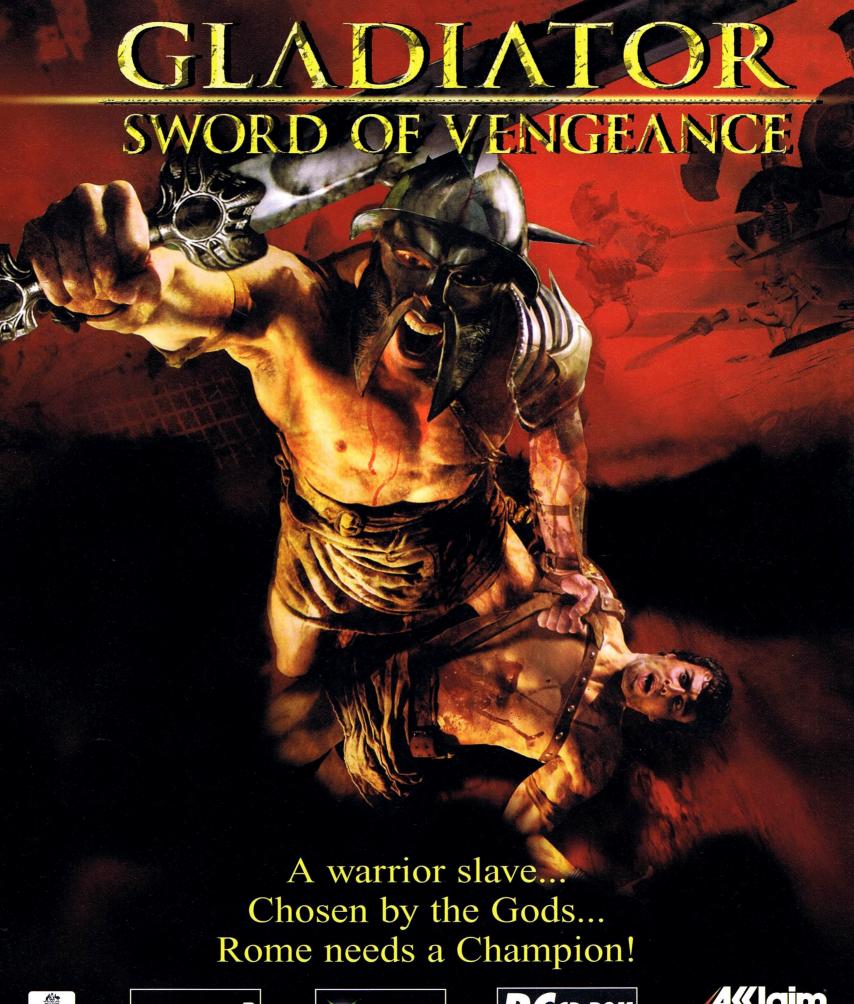
↑ Skating to infinity and beyond!

#### Top Tips

Wheezy the Penguin has a top mission to start you off in this demo. His precious squeaker is missing and your job is to find it by knocking the globe off the chest of drawers. This should reveal its location. Another fun objective is to rescue Hamm from the toilet lid. Activate the extra-strong flush to prove that pigs really can fly.

#### **Anything Else?**

The X, Y and B buttons execute aerial grabs and kickflips. If you press any of these buttons while near a pole or edge surface, you'll execute a grind. When going up one of the halfpipes, press the Y button at the peak of the jump to pull off a handplant.





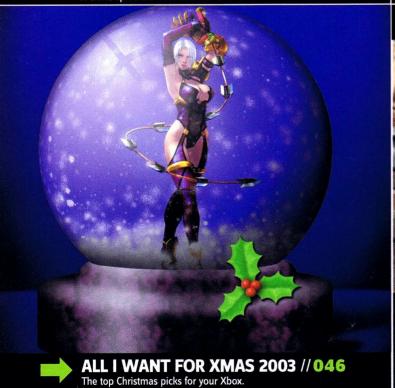


























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>>> METAL ARMS:

**GLITCH IN THE SYSTEM** 

>>> MIDTOWN MADNESS 3 >>> ESPN NHL 2K4

>>> SSX3

>>> AND LOADS MORE!

**DISC 22 GUIDE STARTS PAGE 006** 





PlayStation<sub>®</sub>2 GAME BOY ADVANCE













# GAMAGENNOS/posi-Tipnophero

Live the movie. Be the hero."

Available Hovember 2003







Team up with co-op multiplayer mode.

\*\*\*

9 playable heroes including Gandalf, Frodo and Aragorn.

\*\*\*

15 interactive environments from Minas Tirith to The Crack of Doom.

\*\*\*

Enemies include The King of the Dead, Shelob, and The Witch King.





SCi fights for a slice of Colin McRae's mud pie

WORDS: GAVIN OGDEN

GAME INFORMATION **DEVELOPER: WARTHOG SWEDEN** PUBLISHER: SCI **RELEASE DATE: MARCH 2004** PLAYERS: 1-8

WHEN IT COMES to rally games there can be only one, or rather there has been only one. And that, of course, is Colin McRae Rally (the latest incarnation of which scored 9.1 in our last issue). But Codemasters' total domination of the mud-flinging, tree-dodging rally genre could soon be under threat from last year's World Rally Championship champion, Richard Burns. He's teamed up with SCi and Warthog Sweden to go head to head with McRae both on and off the track.

Warthog knows it's got an uphill battle on its hands and has spent the best part of two years creating an amazingly complex physics system that it thinks gives Richard Burns Rally the edge. During an exclusive presentation of the game, Warthog Sweden spewed out enough maths and physics talk to fill a textbook. But while the talk was big, the implications for how you control the car on the different surfaces are massive.

Most rally games - sorry, make that every rally game - slows you down if you leave the track and cut across the grass or gravel. In rally terms this isn't strictly the

case, as you could be flooring it so hard that a few wheels on the grass wouldn't make a huge difference. After all, what's a little lost traction between bends? Not only will you have to concentrate like a world-class chess player to stay on the track, but you'll also have to find the best line that'll give you the most traction. Make one mistake and you'll most likely break an important part of the car that will stall your chances of placing near the top of the leaderboard.

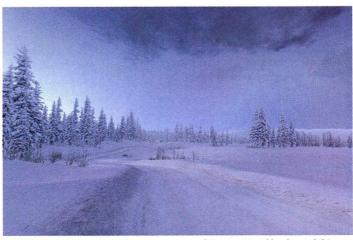
After seeing a very early build of the game up and running, we were amazed at both the amount of detail in there and the pant-browning sense of speed. The first-person viewpoint nearly had us falling off our chairs with blurry motion sickness. Imagine you've been glued onto the bonnet of a rally car with your head just above the grill. It's that fast.

If there's anyone out there who's yet to take the plunge into the world of rally games, the finished title will come fully equipped with a training mode. At the Forest Rally School, Burns will teach you how to drive by advising you on the different track conditions and car performance. Once you think you're ready, you'll then be able to take on Burns in a Challenge mode. And it won't be some super games tester pretending to be him either. He'll play the game right through and have his personal times saved to the game. Ever wanted to beat a rally driver at his own game?

♠ Burns has worked closely with SCi on car performance and track conditions.



↑ The road might look empty but be prepared for wandering spectators.



↑ Zillions of photos were taken to ensure conditions are just like the real thing.

#### WORLD EXCLUSIVE FIRST LOOK // RICHARD BURNS RALLY



#### **GRAVEL TRAP**

ROAD SURFACES in Richard Burns Rally will act just like the real thing. For example, the first car on the stage will be a few seconds slower than the rest because it has to drive over the loose gravel. The following cars then have better grip because the gravel has all been swept over to the side of the road. Throw in real-life obstacles like fallen trees, potholes that could destroy a wheel if hit at full speed and the odd spectator who runs out of the way at the last minute and you're as close to the real thing as possible.



♠ Onlookers sit and wait, ready to take photos.



↑ Tarmac is easily the fastest surface in the game.



↑ Just begging to be driven over...



↑ The sense of speed and danger is amazing.



↑ The Forest Rally School will teach you where to go.



>>> TALENT SCOUT
Members of the
development team
working on the game
really do know their
rally games. SCi has
headhunted talent from
teams that worked on
the first two Colin
McRae games under
Codemasters as well as
Sony's WRC.

>>> MISSED OPPORTUNITY? We couldn't believe ours ears when we were told there was going to be no Xbox Live options at all. Surely being able to race online would give Richard Burns Rally a huge edge over Colin McRae Rally 04, which just has the option to post times to online leagues? There's still five months of development time to go though, so keep your fingers crossed...



♠ Don't hit pot holes or fallen tree at full pelt!



↑ Shhh! There are spectators lurking about...



↑ There's nothing better than the open road.





WORDS: GAVIN OGDEN

GAME INFORMATION

**DEVELOPER: BIOWARE** 

PUBLISHER: MICROSOFT

**RELEASE DATE: NOV 2004** 

**PLAYERS: 1** 

AFTER THE phenomenal success of Star Wars: Knights of the Old Republic (Issue 20, 9.5), BioWare is set to propel console RPGs to new heights with the frighteningly good-looking Jade Empire and we've got the scoop. The galaxy that's far, far away has been replaced by mythical China and the lightsabers have been sheathed in favour of a revolutionary martial arts system.

'This is the game we've wanted to create for over half a decade," says Dr Ray Muzyka, co-executive producer, during our exclusive interview. "We had to wait until the right platform came along and we've given the KOTOR game engine a complete overhaul for what will be a true secondgeneration Xbox game." To this effect you'll see some high-end art throughout, the most solid visuals yet seen on Xbox, a cloth system that's more detailed than KOTOR and even faster loading times.

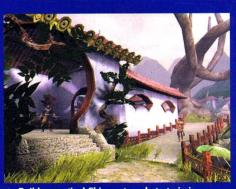
BioWare staffers visited China on several occasions and read up



↑ Quests and missions affect your reputation.



↑ The plot will unfold as you speak with the locals.



♠ Build a mystical Chinese temple to train in.

# PTINUMMO

AS YOU PLOUGH through the story, you'll be able to take over a fortified town and turn it into your base of operations for the remainder of the game. Here you'll be able to send agents out on missions, train students, learn new fighting styles and converse with your loyal followers. To keep pesky invaders at bay you'll need to construct defences, and as your stronghold grows and you gain more kudos the decor will change to reflect the path you've taken. If you're good to your little helpers, they might even erect the odd statue in your honour.

#### WORLD EXCLUSIVE FIRST LOOK // JADE EMPIRE





↑ Judging by this screenshot, it seems the film Big Trouble in Little China still inspires game developers.

#### >>> BONUS

>>> KUNG FU FIGHTING Martial arts styles to learn include Centipede and Mantis while magic styles feature Fire and the Paralysing Palm. Weapons abilities cover Twin Axe styles among others, but the physics system allows you to break chairs and use the legs as a cosh. You can even use a Dirty Fighting style to chuck dirt into the eyes of your opponent, so it's not all about honour.

>>> BIG IN JAPAN
Jade Empire was
unveiled in trailer form
at the recent Tokyo
Game Show to a great
reception. The footage
showcased Ming's
father being murdered
and introduced several
characters that will
play major parts in the
final game.

# "OVER 100,000 LINES OF VOICEOVER GOODNESS HELP THE STORY ALONG AND EVERY CHARACTER HAS A TALE TO TELL"



↑ Once you've got the skills of a Jedi martial arts master, you'll be able to turn yourself into allsorts.

heavily on ancient Chinese legends in order to create a setting for the game that, while complete fantasy, could still pass for the good old days. "You could say that this is similar to a Chinese version of the King Arthur legend," producer Jim Bishop explains. "We didn't want to create the game in a real history, but rather take the best of all the myths and legends we knew about and merge them into one epic story and game."

A calm and peaceful school of fighting is your first port of call in this mythical Chinese role-playing



↑ Don't dare let your master down.





↑ This floating palace in the sky is just one of the many locations that will take your breath away. We all wish we were there, except Ben who can't live without fried chicken.

#### GOOD VS EVIL

AS IN KOTOR, players will be able to choose which path they want to fight for. Decisions you make in the game will affect your reputation across the land and in turn affect the way you interact with NPCs. Rule the land mercilessly with an iron fist or be everyone's favourite listener – it's your call. More than 30 fighting, magic, and weapon styles are also there to be mastered. Each style is basically a package of seven moves with varying speed and attack qualities. These range from punches and kicks right through to transformations into supernatural beings.







↑ Smash tables and use one of the legs as a weapon.



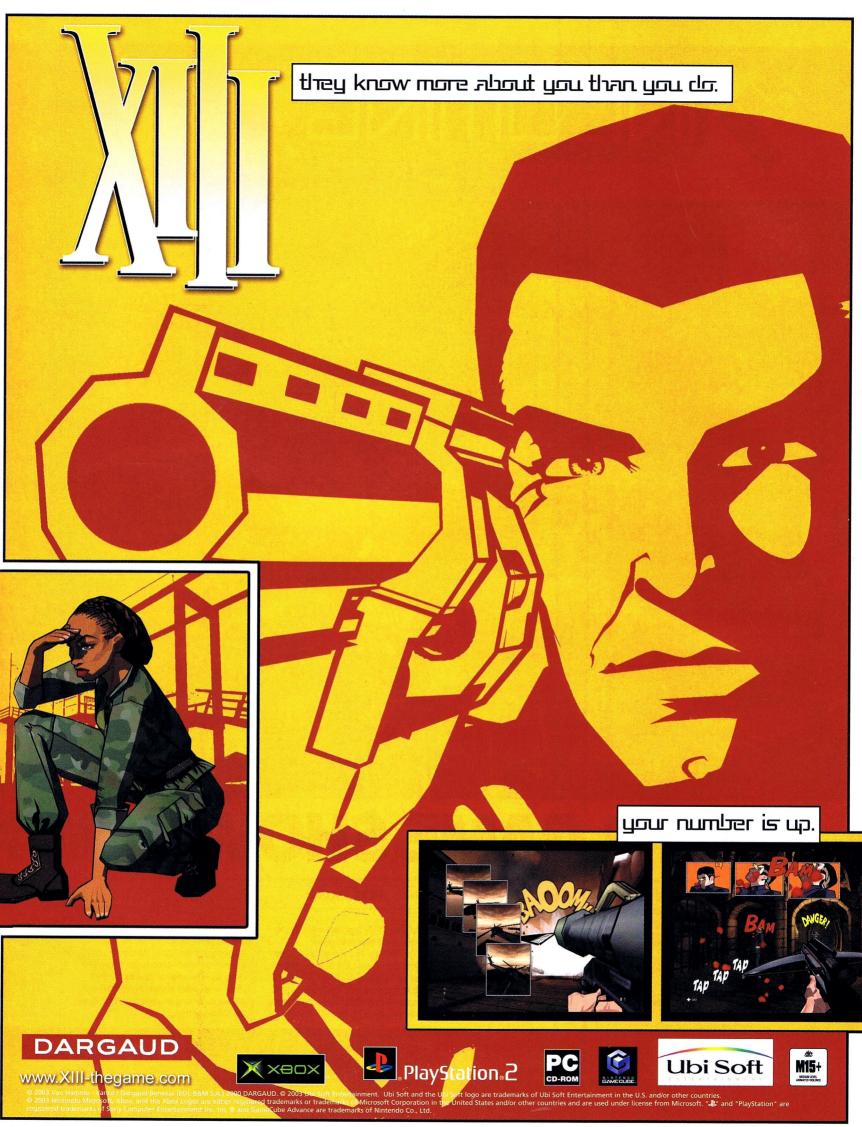
↑ Look at the second generation of shadows and lighting.

game. As a young Padawan learner in the way of the exploding fist, you must start by training your little heart out under the watchful eye of your master. "There are several different fighting styles and magical powers to embrace and a key component of the gameplay will be mastering each technique and being able to fluidly switch between them during combat. The more experience you earn, the bigger and more destructive your powers become," explains Muzyka.

As in Knights of the Old Republic, there'll be a world of colourful characters (all expertly motion captured) dipping in and out of your adventure, offering "comic relief, rivalries, flirtations and some hostility," says Bishop. More than 100,000 lines of voiceover goodness will help the story along and every character you come across has their own tale

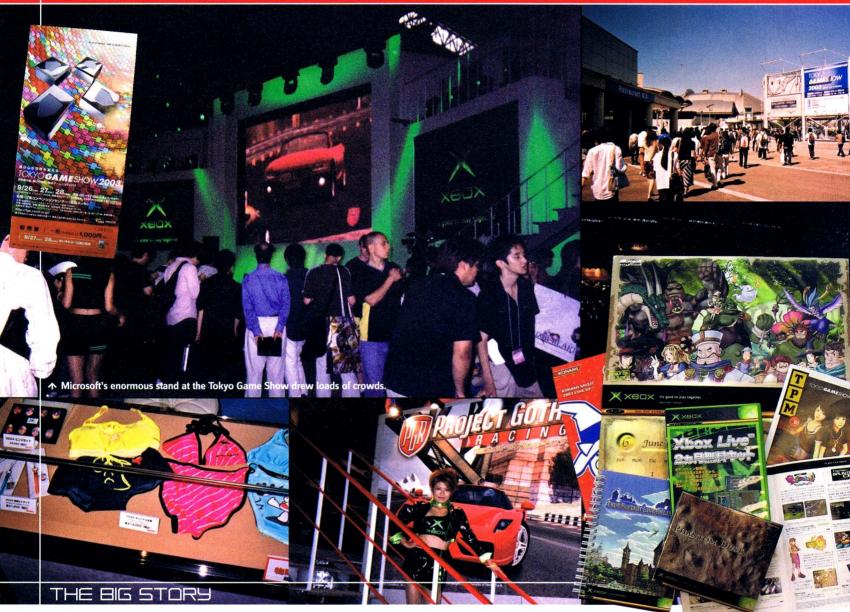
to tell.

Initially there will be seven playable characters to choose from and the one that's currently getting all the attention goes by the quirky name of Furious Ming. He sees the mysterious but extremely evil Death's Hand pound a path of destruction through a monastery, then becomes witness to his father's brutal slaying. After the opening chain of events has unfolded and the Feng Shui well and truly upset, sweet revenge is the dish of the day. And the rest is ancient Chinese history.





LATEST NEWS // FIRST SCREENSHOTS // BRAND NEW GAMES



# TOKYO GAME SHOWDOWN

#### 27 Xbox games stun the Tokyo Game Show as an earthquake rocks Japan

SEPTEMBER 26 saw the 2003
Tokyo Game Show (Japan's answer to E3) open its doors at the Makuhari
Messe in Chiba, Japan. No fewer than 27
new Xbox games were on display at
Microsoft's massive Xbox display booth,
the majority of which were fully playable
to all onlookers and passers by.

The announcement of BioWare's incredible-looking Xbox-exclusive RPG, Jade Empire, was actually held back from last month's X03 event in order to make waves in Japan - and boy, did it ever! Cehck out our First Look at page 016. Also getting their first airing at the annual event were a two-month free Xbox Live

trial for the online Japanese otaku, as well as three brand new promotions.

The 'Kasumi and Hawaii' campaign (working title, thankfully) will see gamers invited by lottery to fly off to a sunny beach to be pampered like a king while playing the latest games. Over the coming months, ten more gamers will be selected

at random to experience the madness that is E3 in America. But by far the most interesting is the 'Dress Up the X' promotion, which encourages owners to come up with original designs for their Xbox cases. After a showing like this one, it's not surprising an earthquake hit Japan the following day...





#### THE INSIDE VIEW

//JOHN LAGRAVE
//PRODUCER, BLIZZARD ENTERTAINMENT

The Asian market is important to the global success of a title and TGS is the perfect place to capture the audience.

ALTHOUGH WE'RE mostly known for our work on PC with the *WarCraft* and *StarCraft* real-time strategy series, we've always been very interested in hitting the console market, and the Asian market has always been an important one for Blizzard, particularly as a Western developer.

Most people don't know us as a console developer here, so we thought the best way to change that perception was to come to the Tokyo Game Show. The fact that the show allows the public to come

in and look around gives it an extra edge that the other shows don't have.

We've had an overwhelmingly positive response from the press at the Tokyo Game Show, which was great for us to see especially after picking up a few awards at E3 for StarCraft: Ghost.

The StarCraft name is also huge in Korea - we've sold over two million units of the StarCraft series so far - and we're hoping that they find Starcraft: Ghost just as interesting.



♠ Most people don't think of Blizzard as a developer of games for consoles.



#### **OUR VIEW**

//OFFICIAL AUSTRALIAN XBOX MAGAZINE
//TO CUT TO THE CHASE AND TELL IT LIKE IT IS

A stunning portfolio of games and quality Xbox Live special offers made Japan sit up and take notice.

IT'S CLEAR from the size of the Xbox booth at the Tokyo Game Show that Microsoft is in no way shying way from the competition – even if the playing field is Sony's back yard. Heavy emphasis was placed on *Project Gotham Racing 2* – the game was fully up and running over Xbox Live with tournaments taking place every hour. The racing game's eye-popping visuals literally stopped attendees in their tracks and drew them into the world of Xbox. Once inside the stand, they had to walk past a plethora of amazing-looking games before they could get out.

The first ever footage of *Jade Empire* was unveiled to the world and seemed to go down a storm. But how could an Xbox-

exclusive Chinese role-playing game made by BioWare fail to excite? Japanese-developed action games *Phantom Dust* and *Magatama* (more info on these titles next issue) also made some pretty big waves. Namco's interesting first-person fighting game, *Breakdown*, had a whole wall to itself, but getting a go on the game was as hard as sitting through *The Nutty Professor* next to a fat person without laughing at the jokes.

Microsoft put on a great show - the Xbox Live girls were by far the brea... er, best - and wasn't intimidated by being the only Western company in sight. The Japanese can run but they can't hide from Xbox. It's only a matter of time...

# Headines

#### **SMART DINOS**

Matt Wolfs explains some of the work that goes into creating in-game Al through the Australian made *Jurassic Park*.

022

#### **TOO POWERFUL**

A funny bit of news on how *Half-Life 2* is looking for the console scene. Apparently, Xbox is the only console that can handle it

022

#### **INVISIBLE WAR**

We've got a few new tasty details about the upcoming sci-fi epic, *Deus Ex 2: Invisible War.* Check it out!

024

#### THE MOLE

Our spy in the industry uncovers a few things about *Full Spectrum Warrior, Far Cry* and development of *Starship Troopers*.

026

#### THE DRAGON SLEEPS

Exclusive new screenshots of the latest *Broken Sword* adventure RPG. This one looks like it's going to be quite special.

026

#### DYNASTY INTERVIEW

Forget big hair, extra large earrings and shoulder pads - we bang heads ith the creator of *Dynasty Warriors 4*.

028

#### IT'S BULLET TIME!

Planet Moon strikes back with an action game that'll bring a tear to your eye and a big smile to your face.

030

#### **GALLERY**

We've got a stash of hot shots from games you can expect to see early next year. Full Spectrum Warrior, Driver 3 and more!

032

#### X-MEDIA

Lord of the Rings: The Return of the King, Indiana Jones, Haibane Renmei, and a bunch of Photoshop Phunnies.

034

#### **CHARTS**

Find out what the rest of Australia has been buying, as well as the games we're all hanging to play.

038

#### **LETTERS**

The Xbox gamers of Australia have a voice and an opinion, and you can read them all in these pages.

042

#### XMAS BUYER'S GUIDE

Can't decide what to buy for Christmas on your Xbox? Our genre-specific guide will show you the way.

046









#### **UNITED STATES**

MERRY CHRISTMAS! AND with that customary holiday greeting out of the way, I welcome you to a special Holiday Edition of my column. Well, as a matter of fact it isn't all that different from my last ones, except I'm slightly loaded on eggnog. Ha!

As the jolly fat man cruises to make his timely deliveries, he is no doubt avoiding the countless dogfights taking place over America. Air Pirates are all over the place these days, bragging about their fantastic kills and daring escapes. I tend to avoid talking about my experiences since they often involving ramming walls in the Lost City and Chicago. I blame it on lag, of course (and no, I'm not talking about the real-world here, but of Crimson Skies).

I think the joy of Christmas is still somewhat muted over here. Everyone wanted Halo 2 to come out in December, even though we all know full well that it's going to be a 2004 release. Every store I wander through has people screaming about Halo 2 and knocking over magazine racks when they don't get the answer they like. Savages, every one of us! Then again, calling us savages when it comes to money wouldn't be too far off the mark. There have been so many excellent game that we've been spending on, starting with Star Wars: Knights of the Old Republic, Amped 2, Top Spin, Project Gotham Racing 2, Ninja Gaiden, Rainbow Six 3, and the new Grand Theft Auto bundle.

So while I'm sitting here getting drunk off the eggnog over a halffrozen TV dinner, wondering when my Christmas stockings are going to he filled I can at least rest easy knowing that we're look towards a new year where the Xbox has a library of games that really kicked this festive season's ass. Can I say "Ass"? [Well, yes, but the rest of the English-speaking world calls it "arse" - Ed]. American publications are all strict about that kind of language, but I feel that's the best phrase to describe Microsoft's closing performance for the year. Encore

> Ryan Thompson **US Correspondent**

# 

Matt Wolfs explains the inner workings pf a largely unsung Australian hero.

JURASSIC PARK: OPERATION Genesis is an underrated game. It's fun, challenging, rewarding and deserves far more attention than it received. It's also a smart game. By smart we mean really smart, Urkel style.

Blue Tongue Software applied serious effort into the AI behind Jurassic Park and it can't go unrecognised. The dino Al is data driven, meaning it interacts with a database. Within a certain proximity, the dinosaurs will all react to the objects in the virtual world (their assigned descriptions and values) according to their individual neural nets. These neural nets are, in turn, formed by the computer architecture that allows processors to learn by trial and error.



★ Lots of tiny people with tiny brains.

Each dinosaur's primary drive is calculated by taking into consideration the objects in the virtual world. The objects are then applied to a needs-versusavailability formula for the dinosaur. For example, what does it need more - food or rest? Once the drive is established, an associated behavioural script is executed based on the nodes of a hierarchical finite



"I am a triceratops. I need to horribly perforate something. After I eat."

state machine (technical explanation http://www.protos.de/TriceDoc/Modelling/ ActorBehaviour.html, English explanation http://www.c3.lanl.gov/megamath/workbk/machine/mabab.html). For those of you who don't have internet connections, a finite state machine is just that - a limited set of 'states', or responses, that can be triggered by a range of stimuli.

Given that Jurassic Park is a simulation with constantly active objects, a number of techniques had to be implemented to maintain an acceptable in-game performance. One such technique is SIMLOD, where the Al system's workload is reduced or increased depending on the player's 'position' in the world. For instance, if the camera is a long distance away from any

particular visitors or dinosaurs, the Al is approximated. However if the camera is close-up and within the vicinity of any of those visitors, dinosaurs or objects, the Al is switched to the highest level Al. Big thanks to Stephen Spagnolo at Blue Tongue for taking the time to explain the Al system in Jurassic Park.



★ Further out, the AI is approximated.

NAMCO ANNOUNCES ACTION ADVENTURE TENTATIVELY KNOWN AS PLAGUE OF DARKNESS FOR NEXT WINTER

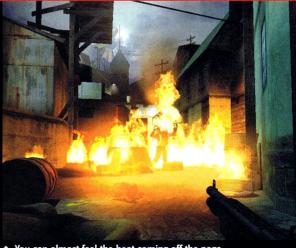
# Half-Life - 2 Powerful for Other Consoles!

Valve's shooter can only run on Xbox

HALF-LIFE 2 will be released on Xbox in 2004 but won't be released on PlayStation 2 or GameCube, Valve told the French press following UK games show ECTS. So that's official.

Instead, a version of the game will be released on the next Sony and Nintendo consoles (whenever that is). This effectively makes the mouth-watering shooter exclusive to Xbox because no other console can run it.

When asked if Half-Life 2 would be released on other platforms apart from the PC, a marketing director said, "Yes, notably on Xbox. The game will be available on Xbox but not until 2004. The partnership with Microsoft isn't exclusive and we will also see this game on the next consoles by Sony and Nintendo." Why bother signing an exclusive deal when other consoles couldn't even run the game if they tried?



★ You can almost feel the heat coming off the page.

# OU IMN THE WOERGROUND

Tony Hawk's
Underground
is going to be one
of the best games
of the year

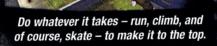
-GameSpy.com

TONY HAWK'S UNDERGROUND

This time it's YOUR journey.

Break the rules. Beat the odds.

Become a Star!



Star in all of the Story Mode

movies alongside the pros.



Tear it up in cars or other rides.



Design your own tricks, decks, goals and levels. It'syour game!

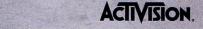
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# "Season's Gratings"

WITH GOODY-GOODY Yuletide cheer in the air, it's easy to forget the real reason behind this holiday season. The 25th of December marks that most sacred of days: the birth of Capitalism. By breaking down the walls between supply and demand, we've created the greatest civilisation in the universe. Average middle class people lead more luxurious lives than the Roman emperors did. It's brilliant, really, and in the Silly Season it's easy to get carried away in a rip-tide of rapturous bliss.

Which is why we must think about those less fortunate. Those who bought Gamecubes expecting the system to be widely supported. Those who thought setting up their PS2 online would be a piece of cake. Those who paid too much for their PC, only to find it had become obsolete months later. It's this time of year that we must give thanks for our common sense, and lend charitable pity on those who've found that the Almighty Dollar hasn't answered their prayers.

It's also time to think twice about our giddy Christmas shopping. Why buy a poor substitute, when the game you really want is but a few months away? Why buy a lame recent addition to a genre, when a better equivalent is available at a budget price? Why plunge into an unknown purchase, when game rentals and cover-disc demos can better inform your choices? Better still, why bother buying a game at all when you can just play it at your friend's house?

With a bit of research and a level head, you too can make the best use of the dollars you have. That's what the modern day Christmas Spirit is all about!

Sharaz Jek is an independent journalist. His views do not necessarily reflect those of the Official Australian Xbox Magazine.



↑ Like the first Deus Ex game, the sequel will portray a stark image of the future. Which has fit birds with impossibly big guns.

# Deus Ex 2: Invisible War

The sequel to one of the PC's biggest cult hits is on its way to Xbox.

Those of you who've played the original Deus Ex on PC will be familiar with its unique style of gameplay. A thinking person's first-person shooter, you could tailor the experience points you earned to suit different skills like weapons-handling or sneaking around, and the skills you gained were used to solve puzzles in different ways. Is a door blocking your path? If you're not skilled enough to pick the lock, then maybe you can take someone hostage and force them to open the door for you. Or you could blow it up. Or just find an alternate route. Every problem has more than one solution, and it's this distilled essence of gameplay that carries over to Invisible War.

Deus Ex 2: Invisible War is set twenty years after the original, and you're caught between warring factions in a conspiracy-laced story where nobody can be trusted. All the functionality of the skills system is contained in 'biomods' – pickups that allow you to instantly augment your skills and abilities. You can become stealthier or faster, but you can also give your character cool abilities like taking remote control of a sentry droid – useful for blasting opponents who are hiding smugly behind a rock.

Invisible War also introduces black market biomods to the equation. One of the products that caught our attention was a nifty little biomod that lets you to suck the energy out of a dead body to heal yourself. Unfortunately, black market biomods also come with a few unpleasant side-effects,

which is the price you pay for the advantages you gain.

NPC interactive carry many branching options, similar to *Knights of the Old Republic*. For instance, if you come across a security guard who's under attack, you can help him take out the intruders, take out the intruders solo, or avoid the whole situation entirely. Unlike other games where different options have no bearing on the game, choosing one option will set into motion a series of events that will open a new path or close an existing one. Thus the choices you make throughout the game will produce a truly unique experience that works towards a different game ending.

The core of *Deus Ex 2*'s gameplay is in its subtle layers of role-play that let you build your unique character attributes, and where your decisions affect the minute-to-minute gameplay. Obviously, you can still modify your weapon into a crazy pistol that becomes your veritable Charlene, but the real fun comes from the freedom you have in deciding whether you're going to go heavy on the kill count or just stay tucked away in the shadows. And if you can't find one way to solve a puzzle then there is always another...and another, and another.





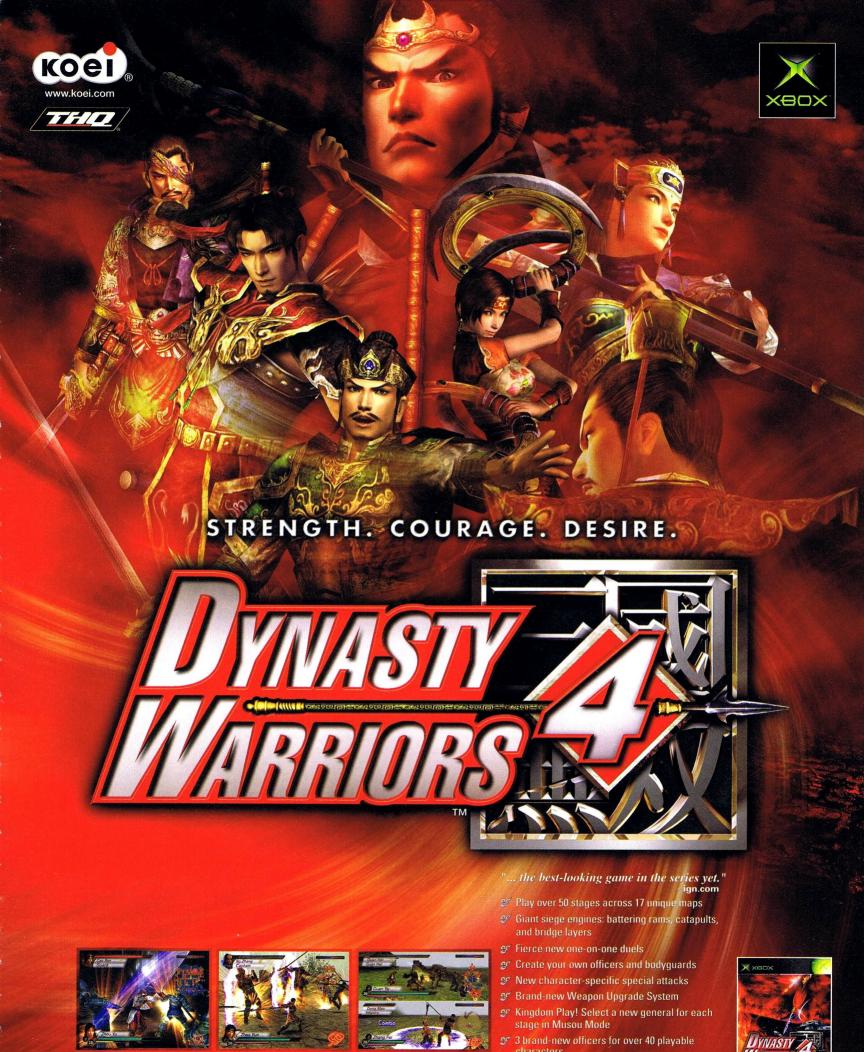
↑ Smooth, sleek new technology.



↑ "Uh, how to we turn this off?"



↑ "Hey, check out my cool goggles."









## News Wire

#### Easily digestible nuggets of key Xbox information

#### **XBOX POWER GEM**

ATI has signed up with Microsoft to power the future of Xbox, whatever the weather. A lab full of men in white coats is already developing super graphics technologies for use in the future of Xbox. Considering what we've already seen the current Xbox pump out, to say we're pretty excited at what the next Xbox will be able to do is a bit of an understatement. Chief Xbox Officer Robbie Bach is equally turned on: "We're combining Microsoft's vision, software experience and R&D resources with ATI's leadership in graphics technologies to create future Xbox products and services that meet the lifestyle needs of consumers in the Digital Decade." Go, Robbie!

#### **VOCAL STARS FOR GALACTICA**

You already know Vivendi is bringing back classic TV show Battlestar Galactica, but did you know that the original actors have signed up to lend their vocals to the game? It's amazing - they're still alive and kicking! Viper pilots Starbuck and Apollo will be voiced by Dirk Benedict and Richard Hatch. Vivendi has also somehow managed to land the services of Terminator 3 starlet Kristanna Loken, who played the T-X.

#### **KNIGHT TIME**

Start-up developer Knight Table Games is working on Unforgiven Sword, an adventure game with five different endings. Due out next year, you strap on the sandals of Corrax, ruler of the once-great kingdom Targona, who must seek the titular sword and save the world from eternal darkness (but no pressure). And apparently there's a bit of mystery behind the Unforgiven Sword...

#### THE 3DO FALLOUT

Developer/publisher 3DO might have crashed and burned, but some of its games have managed to survive the deadly impact. Microsoft has picked up High Heat Baseball (although the chances of us ever seeing it over here are somewhere between slim and none), while Namco has snapped up racer Street Racing Syndicate and Ubi Soft seems to have bagged Might and Magic and Heroes of Might and Magic. There's no word as yet on The Four Horsemen of the Apocalypse, though...

#### Digging harder, faster, stronger and longer than anyone else in the games business

#### URBAN WARFARE EXPANDED

Pandemic Studios is looking to expand its real-time strategy war sim into new environments with future versions of the game. Full Spectrum Warrior follows peacekeeping efforts in a factional urban environment, but the developer envisions taking the RTS game into new realms. A source close to the game let slip that, should a sequel be given the green light, a jungle setting would provide the perfect backdrop for the tactical sim. I'll be keeping my ear to the ground on this one, and you should too.

#### DEFENDER OF SECRET GAMES

With work on Cinemaware's retro-remake of Defender of the Crown almost complete, the team already has plans for its next game firmly in place. But it won't be a turn-based strategy-fest like DotC. I've heard that the studio's next title will focus a lot more on action with sections that involve some strategy - pretty much the opposite of *Defender of the Crown*. The team is also interested in Xbox Live and would have liked to include online options for DotC but couldn't due to time

restrictions. Hopefully we'll hear more before the end of the year.

#### WOULD YOU LIKE TO KNOW

A UK-based developer under the Empire Interactive banner is hard at work on an Xbox version of Starship Troopers. The PC version is taking the lead at the moment but the team has a version up and running on Xbox and it's coming along pretty well, according to the team. Of course they would say that, but the guys are eager for you lot to see the game first.

#### SO NEAR, SO FAR

One of the hottest PC games currently doing the rounds is first-person shooter Far Cry. The game has yet to be officially announced for Xbox but, at a recent trade show, whispers were circulating that a sequel to the Euro-developed shooter is already in the design phase and an Xbox version will definitely happen at some point in the near future. If you've seen any Far Cry shots in an Xbox mag, they've been taken from the PC version. What's that all about?



★ European shooter Far Cry eyes Xbox.



↑ Cinemaware takes a new approach.

#### HOTHOUSE CREATIONS HAS INKED A DEAL WITH KONAMI TO CREATE AN AS YET UN-NAMED GAME FOR XBOX

# 21st Century Fox

#### **Exclusive shots of Broken** Sword's 3D revolution

NICE LEGS, eh? That's Nico you're staring at, the co-star of the third and final chapter in the Broken Sword trilogy that began years ago on PC. Subtitled The Sleeping Dragon, intrepid adventurer George and French wordsmith Nico once again team up to solve billions of puzzles before darkness rules the world.

Previously we've only seen shots of the Congo and Paris levels as well as the inside of a plane. But, after pleading with the powers that be, we've managed to crack the game wide open and reveal new characters and environments you can expect to point and click at. Last-minute tweaks and polish aside, we should have the review ready for next issue. This one looks like it's going to be good.



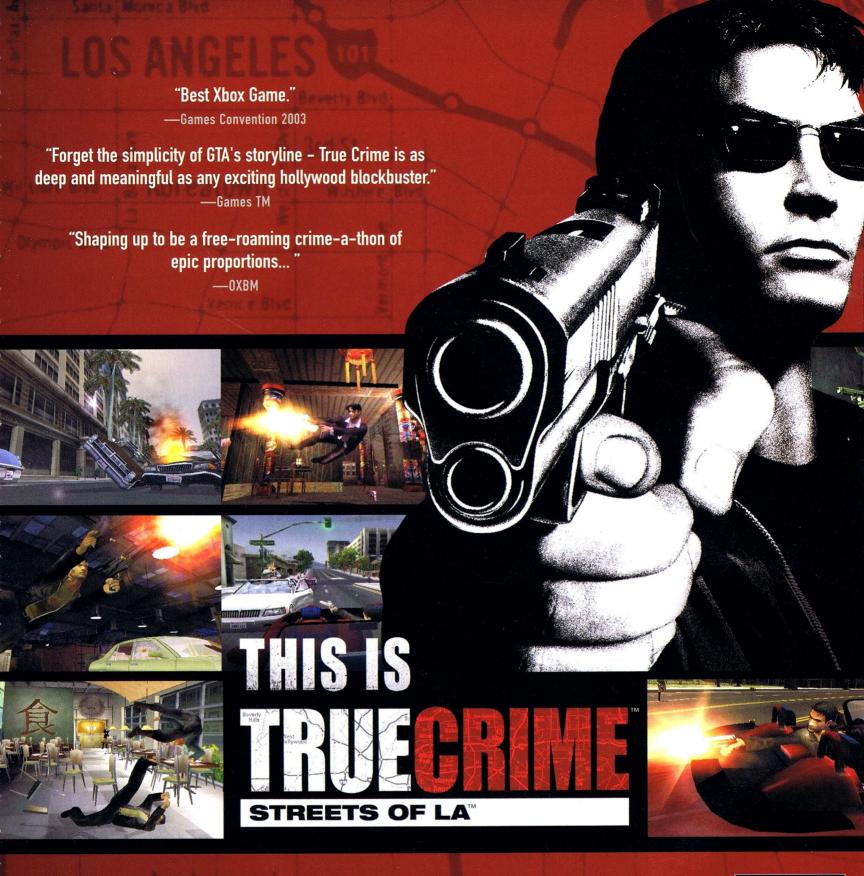
↑ Broken Sword Nico strikes a pose for the in-game camera. And very nice it is too.



↑ There's no shame in running at all.







Includes over 50 original songs from Snoop Dogg, Westside Connection and more.

Visit truecrimela.com for exclusive game clips and soundtrack samples.









ACTIVISION





★ Send your enemies flying skyward.



↑ Mousou attacks clear the crowds

# **Dynasty Warriors 4**

#### Three families. One China. Who wins? You decide

CHINA IS IN your hands, but don't worry. You've also got a big, sharp stick to swing about until everyone's dead. This family feud is far from over, especially if you consider that Koei has already confirmed *Dynasty Warriors 5*.

DW3 went down a treat for many reasons that will be enhanced for DW4. To find out more on this instalment of Koei's top beat-a-thon, we laid siege to Takazumi Tomokie, senior manger of Software Department 4. Eventually he came out of his house to speak to us.

# Official Xbox Magazine: You've titled the game engine 'the Siege engine'. Does this have anything to do with specific gameplay features?

Takazumi Tomokie: It's a term we use to refer to the large-scale objects within the game that are used to attack enemy structures. These include catapults, battering rams, siege ramps and bridge layers. These objects function in real-time, but the player is only able to use them once they have been deployed.

#### What are the biggest improvements over *Dynasty Warriors 3?*

The enemy AI has been changed a lot so enemies are now more reactive than

before. That is, their attack and defence patterns are not scripted, but adapted to their battle surroundings. They're more aggressive and tend to block more often. They come at you in numbers and from all sides. New enemies can randomly appear in previously cleared locations and come to attack so, in a sense, there are now random encounters.

#### Have the bodyguards been changed?

Similar to *DW3*, you can now alter your bodyguards with the new edit function. You can set options such as your bodyguards' names, gender, unit name, colour clothing, weapon type, etc.

#### Is it true you've added a new weapon upgrade system?

Yes, you can now level up your existing weapon rather than having to find new ones. Your weapon gains experience by defeating officers and executing combos – as it gains more experience points, its appearance evolves. The item system has changed to include a slot for Saddles and for the new Orbs.

#### And what do these Orbs actually do? Orbs add special characteristics to your weapon such as elemental and poison

attacks. The number of general items that you can carry depends on the strength of your character but can increase as your level increases.

#### Tell us about the Duels system and how this affects player choices.

The Duels option gives players the chance to take on an enemy officer in a one-on-one battle. An enemy general can challenge you to a duel and you are able to choose whether to accept it or not. If you win, the enemy general is removed from the battlefield and your morale rises. If you die, it's game over.

While refusing a duel can cause your army's morale to drop slightly, if you're going against a brute like Lu Bu, it's probably best to decline... at least in the beginning, as losing will end the game. I think this adds another strategic element to the battles.

## What graphical improvements have been made since the previous outing?

Well we've added a ton of new particle and special effects for each character along with new animations, such as throws. Magical abilities also look a lot better for the particular characters that use them. The framerate has also been



♠ Announce your presence to stun foes.

improved throughout, but especially in the two-player battles.

#### Have any of the main characters been changed at all?

While the character models have been changed, we've stayed with the same core group of characters from the story but added three new ones: Cao Ren, Zhou Tai and Yue Ying. Also, players can unlock multiple outfits for each character, including the character models from DW3. Finally, there is an Officer Edit function that allows players to customise their own Three Kingdoms character and use them within the story.

GAME INFORMATION
DEVELOPER: KOEI
PUBLISHER: KOEI

RELEASE NOV 2003





'ENEMIES ARE MORE AGGRESSIVE. ALSO, THEY
COME AT YOU IN NUMBERS AND FROM ALL SIDES"



## Four heroes. One goal. Limitless danger.

THE ROGUE. THE FIGHTER. THE CLERIC. THE WIZARD.



Somewhere in another time, an old evil rises again. The dead become the living, unheard of beasts emerge and existence itself is threatened. You, together with three other warriors, have been summoned to defeat the mighty evil that threatens the land. To do so, it will take all of your unique skills – the Fighter's unbridled bravery, the Cleric's magical might, the Rogue's stealthy charms and the Wizard's lethal spells. Your epic adventure is about to begin.



"You're not going to be dissappointed."

Game Informer



danddheroes.com



"...sure to keep your thumbs raw for weeks."

Game Informer













↑ The weapons are there to cause over-the-top carnage. Use them unwisely!

# **Armed & Dangerous**

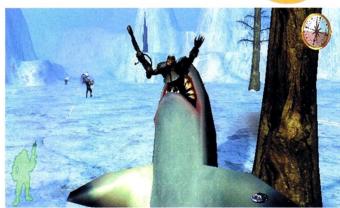
Boy meets gun. Boy loses gun. Boy finds bigger gun

IT WAS IN THE depths of a London fetish club, with robots serving drinks alongside heavily pierced barstaff, that LucasArts chose to demo the latest version of Planet Moon's Armed & Dangerous. Apparently the venue was chosen as a break from the norm, just like the game. After ploughing our way through several new levels, interrogating the nice American man with perfect teeth from LucasArts and wolfing down an untold amount of slightly warm cocktail sausages, we came away thanking the Lord that Armed & Dangerous is up there with Planet's previous efforts, MDK and Giants. Burp!

While the over-the-top action, gameplay and humour are spectacularly good, it's the little touches that take the game to a new level. And it was these talents that attracted LucasArts to the developer. Bored with all the same guns you see in every other game? Then check out the Shark gun, which fires a shark that hunts down the enemy and eats them whole. Class. And you can forget the BFG in Quake - what you really need is the Topsy-Turvy bomb. This turns the whole world upside down making the weird enemy monkeys fall hundreds of miles to their death. This reeks of Planet Moon and we can't wait. Expect a playable demo with a future issue. You'll love it.

GAME INFORMATION
DEVELOPER: PLANET MOON ST.
PUBLISHER: LUCASARTS
RELEASE FEB 2004





♠ Once you've unleashed the Shark gun, sit back and enjoy the chaos.



♠ Blowing up barrels often causes everything around them to explode too.



↑ You can't run or hide from a Sticky bomb.



♠ Blow up everything you come across.



♠ All buildings are there to be destroyed.

#### **Band of Brothers**

THE STORY WILL be played out in classic Planet Moon style, through cutscenes and in-game exchanges. You assume the role of mockney criminal Roman (the, err, brains of the operation) who has Jonesy, Q1-11 and Rexus at his side. With a press of a button, you can send your merry men to attack, hold and cover specific points. Easy and effective.



↑ Q1-11 joins in the monkey mayhem.



↑ Roman prepares the Shark gun for attack.

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# Tom Clancy's

Get the team spirit





www.rainbowsix3.com







## PRINCE OF PERSIA DEVELOPER: UBI SOFT PUBLISHER: UBI SOFT RELEASE: TBA 2004



↑ We've recently clapped eyes on some new footage of the game. It looks even better than that shown at E3!



↑ The remake of the classic picked up an award for the Best Action Adventure Game of E3 and looked stunning.



↑ The Prince became an instant hit with his acrobatic trickery. Now his abilities have increased tenfold.

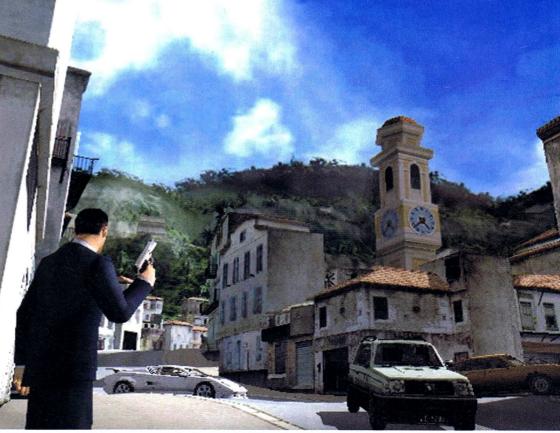
#### DRIVER 3 DEVELOPER: REFLECTIONS INTERACTIVE PUBLISHER: ATARI RELEASE: FEBRUARY 2004



↑ Atari gave Reflections more time to ensure *Driver 3*'s quality rather than rush it out unfinished. Nice one, Atari.



↑ The latest screens shows just how nice the Nice level is looking. Other locations include Istanbul and Miami.



↑ It's been held up a little, but a new movie showcased at UK games expo ECTS had plenty of heads turning.



#### STARCRAFT: GHOST DEVELOPER: BLIZZARD PUBLISHER: VIVENDI RELEASE: MARCH 2004





↑ Just like a bug-eyed chameleon, Nova can blend into her surroundings when in stealth modes.



↑ It looks great, so we're travelling halfway around the world to exclusively play it for our next issue. Stay tuned.

## FULL SPECTRUM WARRIOR DEVELOPER: PANDEMIC STUDIOS PUBLISHER: THO RELEASE: MARCH 2004



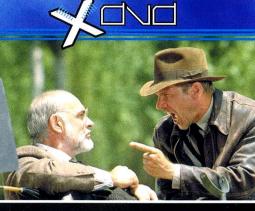
 $\ensuremath{ \Lambda}$  It's a serious real-time strategy game. You must decide the best tactics for each stand-off.



↑ Xbox Live co-op play has been confirmed









# **INDIANA JONES**

#### RRP \$89.95 RATING M15+

WHO EXPLORES THE ends of the Earth in search of ancient secrets? Who gets into fistfights with Nazis wherever he goes? Who, no matter what the danger, always

brings his hat? Why, Indiana Jones, of course! Dashing, do-gooding archeologist, ladies man, whip wrangler, all-American good-guy and devil may care flying fool! Now all three of Indiana Jones' motion picture adventures are available in the one delightful boxed set.

You can thrill to his first adventure as he races to uncover the lost Ark of the Covenant. You can then rides mine carts to escape death cultists. And then, you can watch Indy beat up more Nazis as he does what Monty Python never could, and finds the Holy Grail.

Each movie has been re-mastered with widescreen visuals and extra-crunchy THX sound. The extras have been piled on to the fourth disc in the set, and include brand new footage alongside on-the-set reports form the history of the franchise. Rumour has it that if this set is a success, then George Lucas may release the original *Star Wars Trilogy* in a similar format. Just one more reason to buy!



# THE BACKSLIDERS, LIVE AT THE BASEMENT RRP \$34.95 RATING E

IN A MOVE that won't surprise blues insiders, Sydney's premier jazz club has broken through to the DVD scene. The Backsliders, harmonica blowing, guitar play, angst riddled musicians of note perform live in this notorious blues hole, rattling off a flawless performance of works from their 2002 album *Rhythms*, plus a bevy of

their more aged hits. The sound mix in particular is worthy of note, blaring their powerful instrumentation and husky vocals through every corner of the room. A sprinkling of extras complements the feature length performance. If you're looking to buy some blues on DVD, then it's hard to imagine a better place to start.

#### **HIP HOP VIDEO CLASSICS**

#### RRP \$34.95 RATING PG

A COMPILATION BY the Lyricist Lounge of some of the more influential music videos from the long and glorious history of hip-hop. Beginning with the notable genre crossover of Run DMC's Walk This Way, this video anthology works its way through Chubb Rock, A Tribe Called Quest, and works its way

through to acts like Biz Markie and the Wu Tang. The vids can be viewed in two modes, either as they were originall presented, or in an ultra cut-up remixed version. You have the option of viewing the lyrics so you can sing along, plus there're other goodies like scans of the original 12" sleeve artwork.



#### DVD // CINEMA // ONLINE // MUSIC // EDITED BY JAMES COTTEE







#### LORD OF THE RINGS: RETURN OF THE KING

#### A trilogy that's been worth waiting for.

NOW THAT WE'RE all done scratching our heads over the end of the *Matrix* trilogy, we can finally hunker down to some serious anticipation. A REAL movie trilogy is coming to a close, namely the superlative adaptation of *The Lord of the Rings*. Peter Jackson's Opus will run to an unprecidented length and feature battling armies of a scope never before seen on film. 200.000 orcs will assail the last human

fortress as Frodo and Sam struggle to get the One Ring to Mount Doom. Will they succeed? Only those who've read the books will know for sure.

Still, even those who've read the books will have a hard time guessing what will follow. Will the hobbits make their final confrontation with the mysterious "Sharky?" Will we get any glimpse of the Elvish Havens? Will there be a surprise appearance by Tom Bombadil? Whatever the specifics of this edition, we can be fairly certain that Peter Jackson will only depart form the source material when it's beneficial to our enjoyment of the finished product.

Forget Christmas - Boxing Day is the real holiday to look forward to this year.





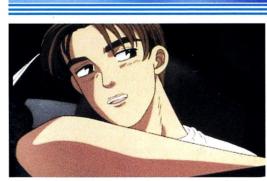
THE PROCLAIMERS BORN INNOCEN

TWIN CHRISTIAN rockers *The Proclaimers* deliver more of their distinctive, twangheavy tunes. True to form, their songs encapsulate how youthful folly is but one facet of the flawed nature of humanity, as their refined musical skills can attest. It's just the thing to listen to if you're on the way from misery to happiness.



VARIOUS JUST BECAUSE I'M A WOMAN

HERE'S AN INTERESTING little concept album. Some of the biggest female vocalists in the world tackle the backcatalogue of Dolly Parton jingles. It's a surprisingly varied and high quality mix, with artists like Norah Jones, Sinead O'Connor, Melissa Etheridge and Shania Twain belting out hits like 9 to 5.



#### **INITIAL D**

#### RRP \$29.95 RATING PG

IF YOU'VE GOT a lust for illegal street racing, and can't wait for 3 Fast 3 Furious, then Initial D might be just what you're looking for. Set in modern day Japan, it concerns the drift-centric lifestyles of racing-obsessed high school students. The trash-talking and floozy-fancying dudes of the Akina mountain racing scene get their world turned upside-down when one of their buddies turns out to be the greatest driver who ever lived. Young Tak's melodramatic adventures on and off track are rendered in an odd mix of 2D and 3D animation. The effect is a little jarring at first, but this pulp fiction stands up okay.



#### **HAIBANE RENMEI**

#### RRP \$29.95

#### **RATING PG**

THIS IS ONE of the weirdest anime series ever released in Australia. From the guys who brought us *Serial Experiments Lain* and *Boogipop Phantom*, *Haibane Renmei* is a haunting, minimalist work that's best viewed late at night. It follows the everyday domestic adventures of Rakka and her Haibane friends, angel-like humanoids with halos and stumpy wings. Co-existing with humans, these creatures are forbidden from leaving the remote walled town in which they live. Who are they? What are they? We may not find out, but watching this arty, widescreen series is still pleasant.



VARIOUS CENTRAL ENERGY

A CURIOUS MIX of techno, old and new. Something of a time capsule, this two-disc set goes all the way back to *Rhythm Is a Dancer*, yet almost keeps pace with the charts by including *Satisfaction* and its ilk. The remixers use a light touch, barely altering the sounds of Moby, Scooter, "Dickheadz," and other, er, artists.



HE WANNABI

DOUBLE-DISC SOUNDTRACK to the movie that parodies all those boy bands for toddlers that have today's littlies' undivided attention. Tracks range from James Brown to Salt 'N' Pepa, but the real value is on the bonus disc, a collection of songs by the Wannabes themselves.

Tracks like "My Grandad Smells" really speak for themselves.



# **LUED**



#### THE VIDEO GAME MUSEUM

#### www.vgmuseum.com

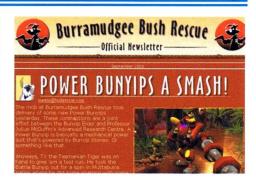
THIS AMBITIOUS, ALL encompassing site is notable for a couple of reasons. It includes technical information and screen shots for a whole host of antiquated video game hardware. Plus, it includes screen shots from the end of hundreds of games as well. Yes, those giddy, adrenaline fuelled moments, where you push a game to its limits, and it rewards you with a few digitised images that you've never seen before – the heroes revel in victory, and the villains swear revenge. Now you can re-live those wondrous gaming moments again and again! Or, if you're too lazy to finish the games you play, you can cut to the chase.



#### **ERROR WEAR**

#### www.errorwear.com

ERROR MESSAGES ARE an inescapable part of our daily lives. It may be something as small as a broken image link on your favourite webpage. It may be something more serious, like the Blue Screen of Death. Irrespective of their gravity, error messages mean one thing – your computer is stuffed, and there's nothing you can do about it. Press any key to return to the desktop? Hah! Not bloody likely. On the plus side, it's now possible to make these irksome computer alerts a part of your stylish wardrobe, by buying Error Wear T-shirts. You can get classic Mac and Amiga error screens, or even a crashed Pac-Man machine. Sweet!



#### **BUSH RESCUE**

#### www.bushrescue.com/gazette.html

TY THE TASMANIAN Tiger was an enjoyable romp - we never get tired of saying it. And the sequel is on its way! Since it's looking to be a Christmas '04 title, info is still a little thin on the ground. But if you want a tantalising glimpse of the future of innocuous platform gaming, then this official news site may be just the ticket. Already the game seems to be taking shape - Ty is back, with his trademark boomerangs. But now he has a new weapon in fighting the force of evil - Power Bunyips. Imagine the exo-skeletons from Aliens, in the hands of strine-speaking endangered species, and you're getting close. Could this be the future of gaming?



#### **BIG DUBYA**

NOW THIS IS a little closer to the mark. For those who don't know, Nintendo recently launched an advertising campaign where they crudely substituted the heads of their characters on to famous photographs. The use of Wario's mugshot in this context is nigh-on perfect. This brings to mind Enron, and W's wild youthful days as a mindless drug hoover. Slashing funding for education while governor of Texas, arranging deals to rebuild Iraq before it had been invaded... all achieved with a flawless "Dumb & Dumberer" demeanour. Who knows, maybe art will imitate life, and in his next game Wario will run for president of the Mushroom Kingdom. It's not like George will be able to object - he said it himself: "I love free speech!" www.somethingawful.com

EVERY MONTH, WE scour cyberspace for the latest in photo-manipulated videogame humour. If you find a picture worthy of *Photoshop Phunnies*, or better yet, if you've made one yourself, send it to us at staff@oxm.com.au with the subject "Photoshop Phunnies", and you could see your name featured in Australia's *Official Xbox Magazine!* 

But then, who would get it?

Eternal Leader in the news...

We hardly ever see the

# The fate of humanity rests with Homer J. Simpson.

"Authentic, enjoyable and fun"

"A must-buy for any Simpsons fan" - 8/10

- Official Australian Xbox Magazine



MAH GROENING







PlayStation.2











## READERS MOST WANTED



LET US KNOW the Xbox games you're most looking forward to. Just send us your Top 10 of anything by email to

staff@oxm.com.au - remember to indicate your order of preference; or snail-mail it to the usual address.



## **OUR SHOUT**

Still desperate for an alternative to *Grand Theft Auto*, lots of us here at *OXM* have our hopes pinned on other wheel-shredding thrillers like *True Crime: Streets of L.A.* and *Driver 3*. Looks like it could be a long wait for the latter, but Nick Kang's romp through crime-ridden Los Angeles should be with us very soon. As usual, *Halo 2* and *Half-Life 2* are leagues ahead, although we still haven't seen much of either game.

## 1. HALO 2

DEVELOPER: **BUNGIE** PUBLISHER: **MICROSOFT**RELEASE: **2004** 

## 2. HALF-LIFE 2

DEVELOPER: VALVE
PUBLISHER: VIVENDI UNIVERSAL
RELEASE: 2004

## 3. FABLE

DEVELOPER: BIG BLUE BOX PUBLISHER: MICROSOFT RELEASE: AUTUMN 2004

## 4. PROJECT GOTHAM RACING 2

DEVELOPER: BIZARRE CREATIONS PUBLISHER: MICROSOFT RELEASE: DECEMBER 2003

## 5. TOM CLANCY'S SPLINTER CELL: PANDORA TOMORROW

DEVELOPER: UBI SOFT PUBLISHER UBI SOFT RELEASE: AUTUMN 2004

## 6. TLOTR: RETURN OF THE KING

DEVELOPER: EA PUBLISHER: EA RELEASE: NOVEMBER 2003

## 7. DOOM 3

DEVELOPER: ID SOFTWARE/VICARIOUS VISIONS
PUBLISHER: ACTIVISION
RELEASE: WINTER 2004

## 8. TRUE CRIME: STREETS OF L.A.

DEVELOPER: LUXOFLUX PUBLISHER: ACTIVISION RELEASE: NOVEMBER 2003

## 9. DRIVER 3

DEVELOPER: REFLECTIONS PUBLISHER: ATARI RELEASE: NOVEMBER 2003

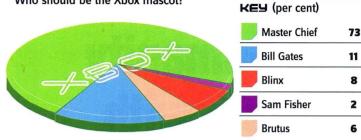
## 10. NEED FOR SPEED: UNDERGROUND

DEVELOPER: EA PUBLISHER: EA RELEASE: DECEMBER 2003

## THE HOT TOPIC

Startlingly relevant Xbox issue of the day

Who should be the Xbox mascot?



## THIS MONTH'S CHART THROB: GAVIN OGDEN

- 1. Star Wars: KOTOR
- 2. Rainbow Six 3
- 3. Project Gotham 2
- 4. Return of the King
- 5. Top Spin





**GAV SAYS:** Finally the world has an awesome *Star Wars* RPG that, once you've started, you just can't put down. Oh, and it's all about the dark side... That should keep me going until the no-holds-barred assault of the Christmas line-up marches into view: furious online

racing, hardcore squad-based action, big-budget blockbusting action and the world's best tennis game. What more could you ask for?

## official Australian XBOX MAGAZINE CHART

WHEN YOU BUY a game from your local video game store, little do you suspect that the DVD has been manufactured from a secret kind of irradiated plastic. It can be detected using a sensor and each game gives off a unique signal. That's how we know the most popular titles of the day.



↑ THE CLASSICS EDITION of Splinter Cell comes with the cinematics from the PS2 version of the game, as well as the Kola Cell and Vselka 1 and 2 missions that are downloadable on Xbox Live. AND it comes with a playable demo of XIII. Can anyone say "bargain"?

## 1. STAR WARS: KNIGHTS OF THE OLD REPUBLIC

DEVELOPER: BIOWARE PUBLISHER: ACTIVISION

Awesome role-playing game set in the Star Wars universe - a must-have adventure.

## 2. SPLINTER CELL (CLASSICS)

DEVELOPER: UBI SOFT PUBLISHER: UBI SOFT

Sneaking around isn't always cowardly, as special agent Sam Fisher proves.

## 3. TOM CLANCY'S GHOST RECON

DEVELOPER: RED STORM PUBLISHER: UBI SOFT

This long-distance tactical shooter is a real come-from-behind favourite on Xbox.

## 4. PIRATES OF THE CARIBBEAN

DEVELOPER: AKELLA PUBLISHER: UBI SOFT

No relation to the movie whatsoever, but a very decent pirate sim no less.

## 5. CONFLICT: DESERT STORM II

DEVELOPER: PIVOTAL GAMES PUBLISHER: SCI

This game has a better chance at finding those pesky WMDs than George Dubya!

## 6. FIFA 2004

DEVELOPER: EA PUBLISHER: EA

EA Sports' seasonal soccer game is back again with all new stats and figures.

## 7. XBOX LIVE SHOOTER PACK

DEVELOPER: VARIOUS PUBLISHER: ACTIVISION

Activision's two-for-one value pack contains RtCW and Soldier of Fortune II!

## 8. WWE RAW 2: RUTHLESS AGGRESSION

DEVELOPER: ANCHOR INC PUBLISHER: THQ

The meaty men of the WWE are still punishing each other on Xbox.

## 9. COLIN MCRAE RALLY 04

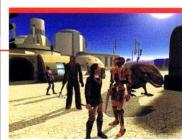
DEVELOPER: CODEMASTERS PUBLISHER: CODEMASTERS

The definitive rally racing game? Oh yes indeed. And it plays best on Xbox, too.

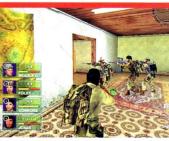
## **10. FINDING NEMO**

DEVELOPER: TRAVELLER'S TALES PUBLISHER: THQ

You're never too young to enjoy a game that recaptures that Pixar magic so well!



↑ WE CAN'T PRAISE Knights of the Old Republic enough at the moment, because it finally goes to show that Western developers can create an epic role-playing game to compete with the Japanese. This definitely bodes well for other upcoming adventures including Fable, Sudeki and Jade Empire (see page 016).



↑ WHILE THE SEARCH continues for the fabled Weapons of Mass Destruction in Iraq, and George Dubya earns the ire of his allies by spending less than 24 hours on their sovereign soil, Xbox gamers can get their fill of the action in this quality squadbased shooter, which is actually a continuation of the first Gulf War.



## XBOX GAME RELEASES The forthcoming games you need to know about

DATE	GAME	DEVELOPER	PUBLISHER	ISSU
SPRING	ALIAS	ACCLAIM	ACCLAIM	17
	AMPED 2	MICROSOFT	MICROSOFT	N/A
	BACKYARD WRESTLING: DTTAH BATMAN: RISE OF SIN TZU	PARADOX IN HOUSE	EIDOS UBI SOFT	N/A N/A
	BIONICLE	ARGONAUT	TRA	N/A
	CRIMSON SKIES	MICROSOFT	MICROSOFT	4
	CURSE	WANADOO	WANADOO	N/A
	DYNASTY WARRIORS 4	KOEI	KOEI	19
	FALLOUT: BROTHERHOOD OF STEEL		VIVENDI UNIV.	16
	FREAKY FLYERS	MIDWAY	MIDWAY	N/A
	FREEKSTYLE	IO INTERACTIVE EA BIG	EA EA	14
	GHOST MASTER	SICK PUPPIES	EMPIRE	N/A
	GLADIATOR: SWORD OF VENGEANCE		ACCLAIM	16
	GLADIUS	LUCASARTS	LUCASARTS	N/A
	GRABBED BY THE GHOULIES	RARE	MICROSOFT	N/A
	HARRY POTTER: QUIDD. WORLD CUF	A SECURE PRODUCT OF STREET	EA	18
	LEGACY OF KAIN: DEFIANCE MAFIA	CRYSTAL DYNAMICS ILLUSION SOFTWORKS	TAKE 2	18 19
	NHL HITZ PRO	MIDWAY	MIDWAY	N/A
	NHL RIVALS 2004	MICROSOFT	MICROSOFT	17
	OPERATION FLASHPOINT: CWC	CODEMASTERS	CODEMASTERS	N/A
	PSYCHONAUTS	DOUBLE FINE	MICROSOFT	6
	ROLAND GARROS 2003	TBA	WANADOO	N/A
	ROLLING	RAGE	SCI	N/A
	SHINING LORE SHREK 2	PHANTAGRAM	PHANTAGRAM TDK MEDIACTIVE	N/A
	SHREK 2 SPONGEBOB SOUAREPANTS	TBA THO	THO	N/A N/A
	SPY VS SPY	TDK MEDIACTIVE	TDK MEDIACTIVE	10
	SWAT: GLOBAL STRIKE TEAM	ARGONAUT	VIVENDI UNIV.	N/A
	V8 SUPERCARS RACE DRIVER ONLINE		CODEMASTERS	21
	TOM CLANCY'S RAINBOW SIX 3	UBI SOFT	UBI SOFT	19
	TOP SPIN	POWER & MAGIC	MICROSOFT	11
	TORK	TIWAK	TBA	4
	TRUE CRIME: STREETS OF L.A. UNREAL II: THE AWAKENING	LUXOFLUX EPIC GAMES	ACTIVISION ATARI	5 N/A
	XIII	UBI SOFT	UBI SOFT	8
SUMMER	007: EVERYTHING OR NOTHING	EA	EA	18
	ADVENT RISING	MAJESCO	VIVENDI UNIV.	20
	APPRENTICE KNIGHT	MICROIDS CANADA	MICROIDS	16
	ARMED AND DANGEROUS	PLANET MOON	ACTIVISION	18
	ARX FATALIS	ARKANE	D'CATCHER GAMES	
	AUSTIN POWERS	TBA	TAKE 2	4
	BATTLESTAR GALACTICA BC	VIVENDI UNIV. INTREPID ENT.	VIVENDI UNIV. MICROSOFT	17 7
	BEYOND GOOD & EVIL	UBI SOFT	UBI SOFT	17
	BLOODY ROAR EXTREME	KONAMI	KONAMI	N/A
	BREED	BRAT DESIGNS	CDV	N/A
	BROKEN SWORD: TSD	REVOLUTION	THQ	17
	CELEBRITY DEATHMATCH	BIG APE	TAKE 2	22
	COUNTER-STRIKE CRASH NITRO KART	VALVE VICARIOUS VISIONS	VIVENDI UNIV.	N/A 22
	DEUS EX: INVISIBLE WAR	ION STORM	EIDOS	12
	DINOTOPIA: SUNSTONE ODYSSEY	TDK MEDIACTIVE	TDK MEDIACTIVE	17
	DR. SEUSS' THE CAT IN THE HAT	MAGENTA	VIVENDI UNIV.	N/A
	DUNGEONS AND DRAGONS: HEROE	S ATARI	ATARI	N/A
	ESPIONAGE	MIDWAY	MIDWAY	17
	FIFA 2004	EA	EA	17
	GOBLIN COMMANDER: UTH	JALECO	JALECO	N/A
	LMA MANAGER 2004 MAGIC THE GATHERING: BATTLEGR.	CODEMASTERS SECRET LEVEL	CODEMASTERS	17 18
	MEDAL OF HONOR: RISING SUN	EA EA	EA	16
	METAL ARMS: GLITCH	SWIGIN' APE	VIVENDI UNIV.	20
	MISSION IMPOSSIBLE: OP. SURMA	PARADIGM	ATARI	3
	NBA 2K4	SEGA	SEGA	22
	NINJA GAIDEN	TECMO	MICROSOFT	18
	PROJECT GOTHAM RACING 2	BIZARRE CREATIONS	MICROSOFT	21
	ROADKILL	MIDWAY	MIDWAY	17 N/A
	ROBIN HOOD: DEF. OF THE CROWN SECRET WEAPONS OVER NORM.	CINEMAWARE LUCASARTS	ACTIVISION	N/A 17
	SEGA GT ONLINE	SEGA	SEGA	22
	SNIPER ELITE	REBELLION	WANADOO	12
	SPY HUNTER 2	MIDWAY	MIDWAY	N/A
	STAR WARS JEDI KNIGHT: JEDI AC.	RAVEN	ACTIVISION	N/A
	STARCRAFT: GHOST	BLIZZARD	VIVENDI UNIV.	10
	STRIDENT - THE SHADOW FRONT	PHANTAGRAM	PHANTAGRAM	4
	SUDEKI TERMINATOR 3: RISE OF THE MACH.	CLIMAX	MICROSOFT	11 N/A
	THE HAUNTED MANSION	HIGH VOLTAGE	TDK	N/A
	THE HOBBIT	SIERRA	VIVENDI UNIV.	15
	THE SIMPSONS: HIT AND RUN	RADICAL	VIVENDI UNIV.	22
	THE SIMS BUSTIN' OUT	EA	EA	20
	THE SUFFERING	MIDWAY	MIDWAY	20
	THE X-FILES: RESIST OR SERVE	SIERRA	VIVENDI UNIV.	N/A
		EA	EA	17
	TLOTR: RETURN OF THE KING		MINISTER CONTRACTOR OF THE PERSON OF THE PER	
	WHIPLASH	CRYSTAL DYNAMICS	EIDOS	N/A
TBA 03	ANALYSIS OF BETTER DESCRIPTION OF THE TOTAL PROPERTY OF THE PR		EIDOS ACTIVISION UBI SOFT	N/A 18 4

	FALCONE: INTO THE MAELSTROM	POINT BLANK	VIRGIN	N/A
	FLAT-OUT FROGGER CLASSIC	BUGBEAR ENT. KONAMI	TBA KONAMI	N/A N/A
	GRAND THEFT AUTO 3 / VICE CITY	ROCKSTAR	TAKE 2	22
	HAVEN: CALL OF THE KING	TRAVELLER'S TALES	MIDWAY	9
	INSIDE PITCH 2003 LEGION	MICROSOFT SEVEN STUDIOS	MICROSOFT	16 4
	LOOSE CANNON	DIGITAL ANVIL	UBI SOFT	4
	MOTO X	KONAMI	KONAMI MICROSOFT	N/A 10
	MUZZLE FLASH PILLAGE	JVC BITS STUDIOS	TBA	20
	POWERDROME	ARGONAUT	ТВА	N/A
	RUN LIKE HELL SHAYDE: MONSTERS VS HUMANS	INTERPLAY TBA	VIVENDI UNIV. METRO 3D	N/A N/A
AUT 04	DANCING STAGE	KONAMI	KONAMI	19
	DRIVER 3	REFLECTIONS	ATARI	N/A
	FABLE HALO 2	BIG BLUE BOX BUNGIE	MICROSOFT	12 9
	KAMEO: EOP	RARE	MICROSOFT	10
	KILL.SWITCH KOREA: FORGOTTEN CONFLICT	NAMCO PLASTIC REALITY TECH.	TBA CENEGA	18
	LINKS 2004	IN-HOUSE	MICROSOFT	N/A
	MASTERS OF THE UNIVERSE	SAVAGE	TDK	N/A
	MIDWAY TREASURES MUSIC MIXER	MIDWAY WILDTANGENT	MICROSOFT	N/A 18
	PILOT DOWN	WIDE GAMES	WANADOO	N/A
	PRINCE OF PERSIA: SANDS OF TIME	UBI SOFT	UBI SOFT	18
	R: RACING EVOLUTION RACE DRIVER 2	NAMCO CODEMASTERS	TBA CODEMASTERS	18 N/A
	RICHARD BURNS RALLY	TBA	SCI	N/A
	ROGUE OPS	BITS STUDIOS SEGA	KEMCO SEGA	N/A N/A
	SONIC HEROES SPLINTER CELL 2: PANDORA TOM.	UBI SOFT	UBI SOFT	N/A 19
	TEENAGE MUTANT NINJA TURTLES	KONAMI	KONAMI	N/A
	THE FAST AND THE FURIOUS WORLD CHAMPIONSHIP POOL 2004	GENKI BLADE INTERACTIVE	VIVENDI UNIV. KEMCO	N/A 22
MID 04	KILL BILL	BLACK LABEL	VIVENDI UNIV.	N/A
	FULL SPECTRUM WARRIOR	PANDEMIC	THQ	N/A
	SHADOW OPS: RED MERCURY SPIDER-MAN 2	ZOMBIE TREYARCH	ACTIVISION	18 N/A
	STEEL BATTALION: LOC	CAPCOM	САРСОМ	N/A
ATE OF	THIEF 3	ION STORM	EIDOS	N/A
LATE 04	CONAN MEN OF VALOR: THE VIETNAM WAR	CAULDRON 2015 INC	VIVENDI UNIV.	N/A 20
	CALL OF CTHULHU	ТВА	HEADFIRST	12
TBA 04	AREA 51 BLACK & WHITE: NEXT GEN	MIDWAY	MICROSOFT	N/A
	BLACK 9	MAJESCO	VIVENDI UNIV.	20
	BLOODRAYNE 2	MAJESCO	ACTIVISION	N/A
	CALL OF DUTY CARVE	SPARK ARGONAUT	ACTIVISION TBA	17 19
	CONKER: LIVE & UNUCT	RARE	MICROSOFT	18
	DEAD OR ALIVE 4: CODE CRONUS DEAD OR ALIVE ONLINE	TECMO TECMO	MICROSOFT	N/A 18
	DOMINION	PHAROAH	TBA	4
	DOOM 3	ID/VICARIOUS VISIONS	ACTIVISION	N/A
	DUALITY ENCLAVE 2	TRILOBYTE GRAPHICS STARBREEZE	PHANTAGRAM SWING	16
	FARENHEIT	QUANTIC DREAM	VIVENDI UNIV.	18
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	JUSTICE LEAGUE LOBO	TRAVELLER'S TALES KEMCO	MIDWAY KEMCO	N/A N/A
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	XYANIDE XYANIDE	PLAYLOGIC	PLAYLOGIC	N/A
	ZANZARAH: THE HIDDEN PORTAL	VIRTUACRAFT	XICAT	N/A















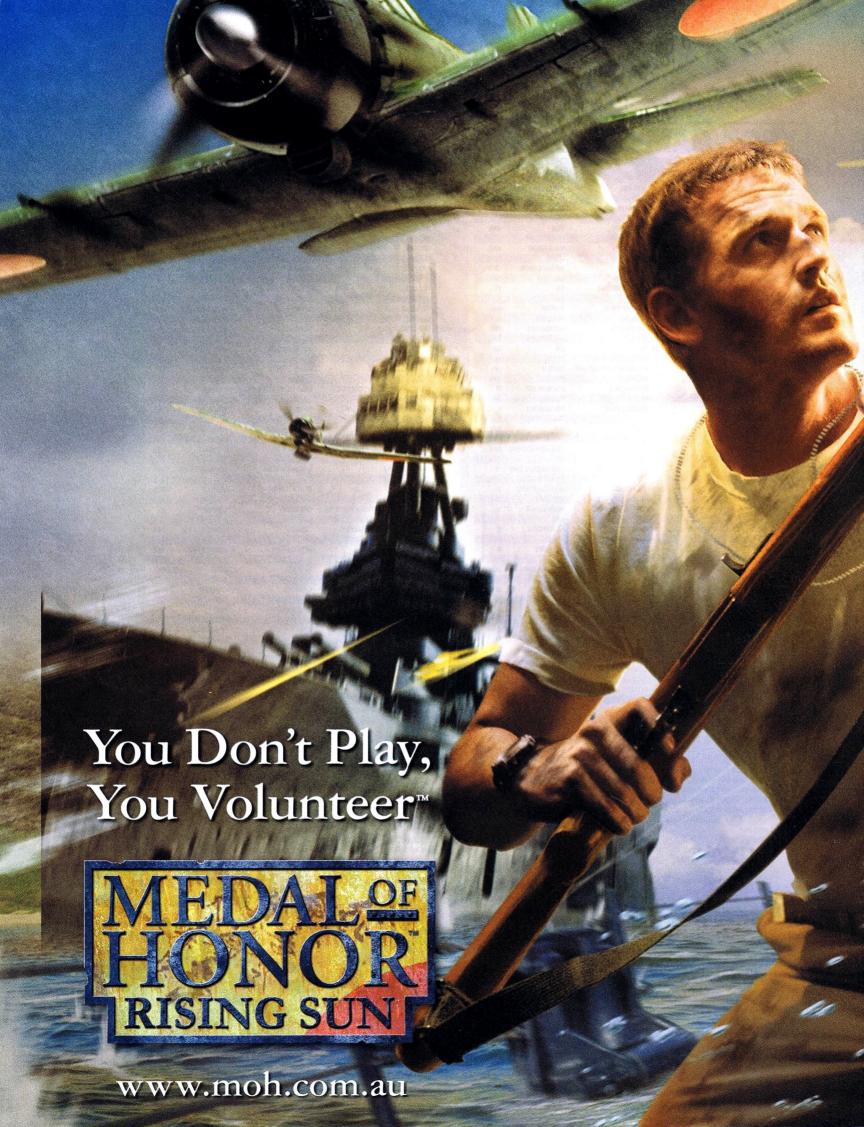


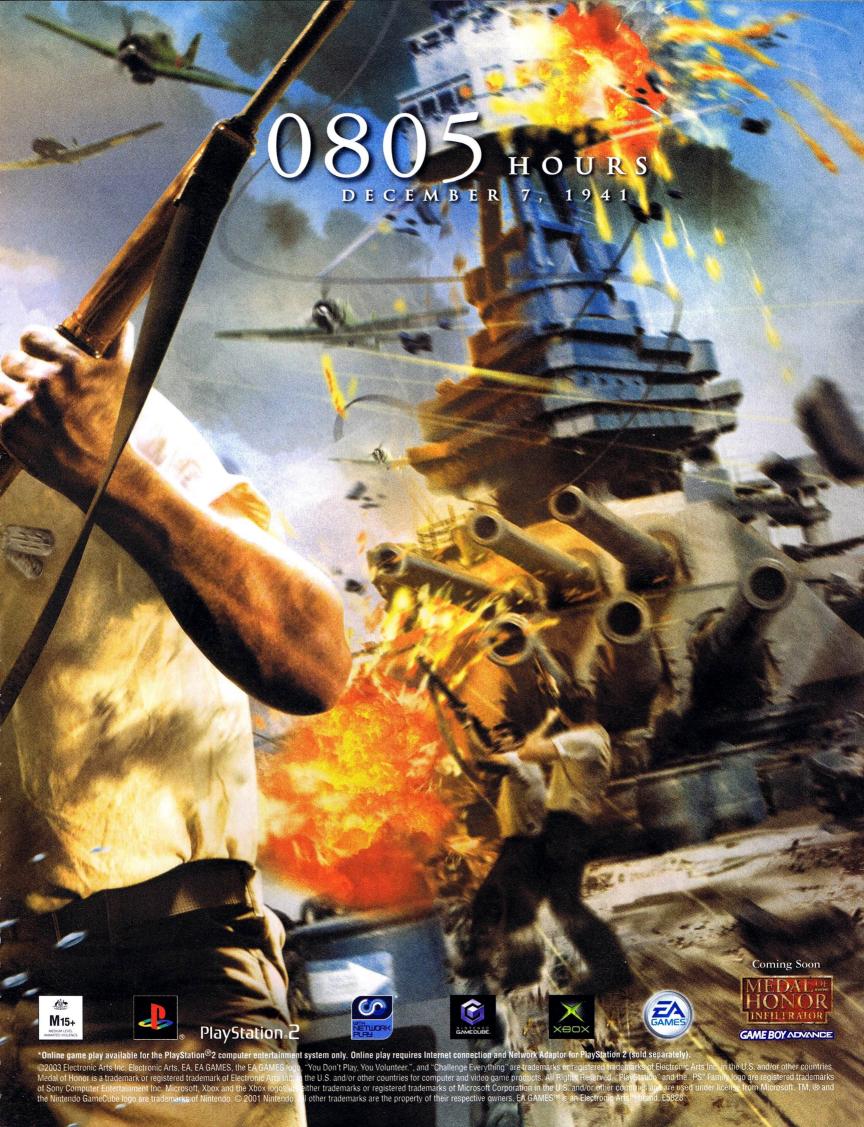












## LETTERS



WRITE TO US AT: Official Australian Xbox Magazine, PO Box 1037, Bondi Junction, NSW 1355 **Email us at:** staff@oxm.com.au. Your opinions count - we want to hear them!



## ETTERS 22 EDITOR

NAME: KEVIN CHEUNG GAME OF CHOICE: TOP SPIN

WE GOT A LOT OF love from readers without Xbox Live who downloaded the Kola Cell level from our demo disc last month. We're currently working on getting more Live content on the disc so stay tuned!

## **LAZY DAYS**

I was on my PC the other day, wondering which of my mates were online. I really couldn't be bothered to go turn on my Xbox and look at my Friends List, so that got me thinking: 'What if there was a site where you could sign in with your Gamertag and see which of your friends are online?

I'd also like to say that we're the best Xbox Live clan! If there are any challenges for us then we'd like to hear from you! Steve (leader of [CT] clan),

via email

What if there was such a site? Would you bother leaving your PC even then? Would you bother playing? Or eating? Or breathing? Just what can you be bothered to do, Steve?

**HERBY GOES BANANAS** Hi. I have made a short video containing some glitches in Halo. I guarantee you won't have seen some of these before - I have videos of me getting out of Blood Gulch and transporting myself to the middle of Sidewinder. Nothing on the video was done using an action replay or any other

modding device. Should I send it in? Herby, via email

Sure Herby, send it in. You've made some pretty bold claims there, and a lack of tangible evidence will result in your naming and shaming and humiliation amongst your peers. Prove these feats however, and ve shall be revered as a hero in these hallowed pages. Time will tell.

**LORD OF THE RPG** I was reading the piece you guys wrote on the new Star Wars RPG (it was very good by the way) and it got me thinking. There have been loads of quality licences that have been wasted - The Lord of the Rings in particular. This licence has the potential to be a great RPG, but instead it has been turned into a cheap hack 'n' slash complete-in-an-hour game. Are there any plans to turn LOTR into an RPG?

Norman Elliot. via email

There are three more forthcoming Xbox titles from the LOTR world, but none of these are an out-and-out RPG. Whilst the



↑ Return of the King: cheap hack 'n' slash? Waste of a licence?

comprehensive depth of the novels would provide an apt setting for a game of that nature, developers decided to focus more on the action side of things for the Xbox. Also, the freedom of an RPG might go against the fiction. I certainly wouldn't say The Return of the King was a cheap hack 'n' slash, though (see our review this issue).

## THE LONG AND SHORT

I am responding to Anthony Coombes's letter in Issue 20, stating that a long game is of no use to

him. That's fair, but I'm sure the majority of Xbox owners expect a game that will take them a while to complete. If a game is short, chances are it'll be taken back to the shop. Like Anthony, I don't have much time for playing Xbox, so I just like the occasional go of Burnout 2. Developers make games longer, therefore making you play for hours on end. Why don't they make a game that is good in short blasts?

By the way, did Jon leave a virus in the computers, as a way to remember him, or did he just go?

via email

Cameron Clark,

I want to express my outrage about the original Xbox Controller being phased out and the S being

I, like most other gamers who own an Xbox, have now gotten used to the button positioning on the original pad. Two questions for you: do you agree with me? And which type of controller is the main one you use for reviews in the office? Cheers, I'm glad I got that out of my system!

losh. via email

Well, no offence to anyone, but I honestly prefer the S pad. Of course, I still have a lot of love for the original Duke controller just from having played on it for countless hours, and there's nothing to say I can't play my games just as well on them... except for one area: any game that relies on the D-pad. If you're a fighting game nut like myself or Matt, you'll swear blind that the S pad is better.



Fill you have something to ask or say, write to us at: staff@oxm.com.au or send snail mail to Official Australian Xbox Magazine, PO Box 1037, Bondi Junction, NSW 1355. With thanks to Atari, the winner of the Star Letter each issue gets a game - a good game - of our choosing. Get writing!

## OXM Hall of Shame

The terrible things we got up to this month

- · Phil's been away the last two weeks so all the women in the building had a hassle-free fortnight. He's back now though, so mace at the ready, ladies.
- · Vanessa and friends went out to Paddington to an underground goth bar. Dressed head-to-toe in black and sporting studded dog collars, they sat around a huge coffin table and discussed the tragedy of how metal's gone all mainstream.
- · Ben's moved house and now lives just ten minutes away from the OXM offices. Better still, the KFC next door to him delivers.
- · At Max's leaving drinks, new boy Andy got so drunk he threw up on the train home then passed out, threw up outside the station, passed out in his girlfriend's hallway, then threw up again in her bedroom. Classy guy.



♠ Nice collar. Lead just out of shot.



↑ Andy and alcohol don't mix well.



↑ 'Cos if you know your history it's enough to make your heart go woaaaaahh!

There are plenty of great pick-up-andplay games out there - check out this month's reviews of Club Football, and there are games like Soul Calibur II, WWE Raw 2 and Voodoo Vince as well. It is often a game's downfall that it is too short and, at a usual price of \$99.95 a go, most gamers want to feel like they're getting their money's worth, especially if they only buy a few games a year.

The day Jon left the office was complete turmoil. Ben's hair straighteners, Phil's glasses, Vanessa's black lipstick - all gone - with a video of Jon maniacally laughing on repeat play on his PC.



## **FACE-OFF**

Which is better, Xbox or PlayStation 2? Just take a look at the facts..

Xbox hardware: twice as much power as the PS2, a hard drive, built-in broadband adapter and Dolby 5.1. PS2 hardware: none of the above.

Xbox: 1 PS2: 0

Xbox best games: Halo, KOTOR, Brute Force and Blinx.

PS2 best games: GTA (coming to Xbox), Pro Evo Soccer (FIFA's improving) and Jak & Daxter (a platform game).

Xhox: 2 PS2: 0

Xbox most-awaited games: Halo 2, Fable, Half-Life 2, Doom 3 and Project



## DOUBLE TROUBLE

Will Halo 2 host co-op or will we have to make do with the dual machine pistols?

> Toby Dumbarse, via email

Bungie has delayed Halo 2 to make sure everything is perfect and the title can live up to all the hype. One of the best aspects of the first game was the co-op mode, so rest assured this will be in the sequel.



## KING OF WISHFUL THINKING

Do you think you guys will have a playable Halo 2 demo at Christmas? If so, what level will it be? Conor Nolan

Christmas morning often brings surprises, and this year may be no different. A Halo 2 demo is on the way, but with Bungie being more secretive than Area 51, a date hasn't been confirmed. Christmas lists to Santa Talbot, The North Desk, OXM.



## DIP, DIP, DOG...

Is there any special way you pick what game will be a classic? Or is it just a case of eenie. meenie, minee, mo?

> 'Agent Smith', via email

via email

It's fun enough if we play it every lunchtime. It's good enough if Ben won't put it down and do some real work. It's challenging enough if Phil dies/crashes/loses within ten seconds of picking up the controller.



## **GIMME GIMME**

Where do you get your web images from (links, pics)? Daniel Cox, via email.

We have the seven dwarfs furiously working away under our desks, able to conjure up any image we desire at a moment's notice.



## THE PLOT THICKENS

Ever thought why Microsoft said Halo 2 won't be ready until 2004? I'll bet on 8 October 2004. Why? Think about it! Those with Xbox Live are going to want to play it on

Gotham Racina 2. PS2 most-awaited games: GT4 (yawn)

and Metal Gear Solid 3 (that's all). Xbox: 3 PS2: 0

That's all the evidence you need... Joseph Lynch, via email

There you have it. The proof is in the pudding. What we've known all along.



## **OUR GREATEST HOUR**

The other day I was playing Medal of Honor: Frontline when I realised that the game

developers were losing their sense of taste. I mean the D-day landing level, for Xbox Live. Are you going to think twice about renewing your subscription with the arrival of Halo 2?

via email

An interesting conspiracy theory. Rumours that Smoking Man secretly controls the shadow board of Microsoft are completely unfounded.



## IN PRAISE OF THE HAIRY ONE

I just have to say that Ben has the biggest, bushiest monobrow that I have ever seen. Well done Ben, at least you're good at something!

Cameron. via email

Vanessa's tweezers fell out of her make-up bag the other day. Owen threatened to hold Ben down. You should've seen him run.





## IN NEED OF KOLA

I live in Belgium and I read that Kola Cell was included in the August issue of OXM. How I can get the magazine with Kola Cell?

Dries Vervoort. via email

Gremlins in the works always cause headaches in this technological age, and Kola Cell was no exception. Everything's been sorted now, and it was on our December cover disc. After this teething experience, downloadable content should now be more readily available for our demo disc, so keep an eye out.



## **CHEEKY CHAPPY**

I'm thinking of subscribing to your magazine. Do you offer a free gift? If you don't ask, you don't get. Sometimes if you ask you still don't get, but it's worth a try.

David Osborne, via email

You don't get something for nothing in this life David, but here at Official Xbox Magazine we like to be different. Have a look at page 056 and feast your eyes on what you could win by signing up for a subscription. How kind are we?

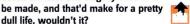
instance - they make something that resulted in the death of hundreds of people into something entertaining. It's a good game but did EA stop and think for one moment about the true terror?

Adam Sawver. via email

develop the game to be as realistic as possible to pay tribute to those who fell that day. I think they did a pretty decent. But if we were to follow your argument, all books, films, games etc based on wars and tragedy shouldn't

We hear you Adam, but EA tried to

dull life, wouldn't it?



## TAKE ON THE



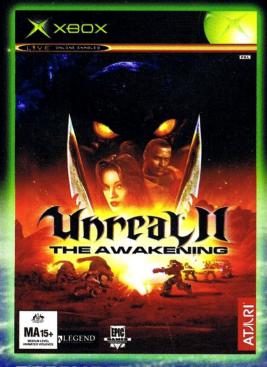
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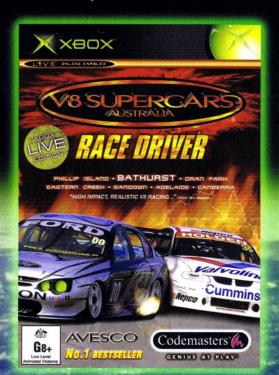
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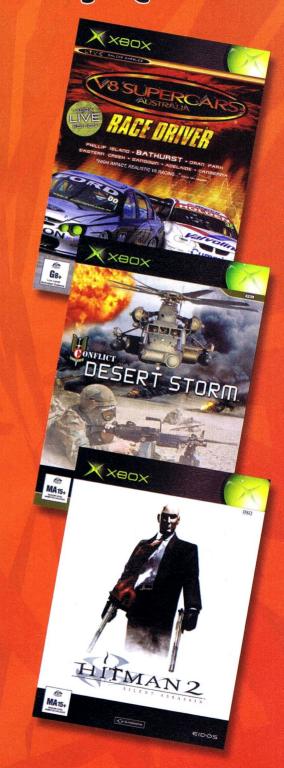
## WORLD

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# CLASSIC GAMES NOW \$10.95



GET 'EM WHILE THEY'RE HOT!



when we're planning to spend lots of money this Christmas - on friends, loved ones, and especially on yourself. We also know you're not planning to waste any of it. To help ensure you have the merriest Christmas, we've compiled a buyers guide for the hottest gaming hits of the season.

words: James Cottee

## All I want for Xmas 2003





This is the game that everybody's talking about - a daring blend of real-time action and deep role-playing strategy. Set in a turbulent era 4000 years before the petulant Luke Skywalker left his Uncle Owen's farm, players have total freedom of choice. This goes far beyond typing in a funny character name, extending to real good versus evil role-playing choices. Be a goody-two-shoes, and you get good-guy Jedi powers. Insult and steal from the NPCs, and you get nasty Sith abilities. Did we mention the gripping story, the slick animation, and option to make your adventurers wander around in their underwear? This is truly a massive roleplaying epic, with plenty of replay value. School holidays and Daylight Saving are no match for *Knights of the Old Republic* - you may still be playing it next summer.

## RPG: KNIGHTS OF THE OLD REPUBLIC



♠ Soul Calibur II is a test of who the true masters of fighting games are.

Is this the best fighting game ever? We certainly think so - and you'd be hardpressed to find anything wrong with it. This superlative weapons based fighter sees the return of some of the most distinctive characters in the pantheon of gaming. Voldo's back, with his creepy hand-blades, as is lvy the dominatrix with her magical sword/flail. New characters include guys and dolls with exquisitely balanced fighting moves, along with two characters designed by Todd McFarlane: Necrid and Spawn. This fighter is so deep, most people only ever master one or two of the characters. But with a long Boxing Day stretching out ahead, you'll have plenty of time to try them all. Did we mention this game looks gorgeous? Go! Buy now!

## FIGHTING: SOUL CALIBUR II



Deathrow developer Southend has done it again, with a title that breaks new ground any way you look at it. XIII is the world's first cel-shaded first person shooter, a game that makes good use of the brash rendering technique. Comic book frames pop-up on screen to highlight significant game events, and comic book words add graphic emphasis to all the death and destruction around you. This vivid creativity extends to the story, a baffling melange of plots and counter-plots, hallucinations and flashbacks. Add Xbox Live support and some solid multi-player options, and you've got a truly unique sample of gaming history. This is great fun, with or without Xbox Live.

We should be able to banish the cultural cringe once and for all, now that Project Gotham Racing 2 is on the scene. One glance at the cover will reveal that Sydney has finally become part of the global consciousness, a city filled with A-grade landmarks. And while you're tearing around The Rocks, you'll be harassed by ignorant American voices, demanding to know where all the kangaroos are - just like real life! That's because PGR2, in addition to being a super slick, second generation Xbox racing title, fully supports Xbox Live. Game modes reward stylish racing, and for once the depopulated streets will be realistic - Miller's Point is fairly dead, day or night.



♠ Bragging rights abound for winning a race.



PARTY GAME:

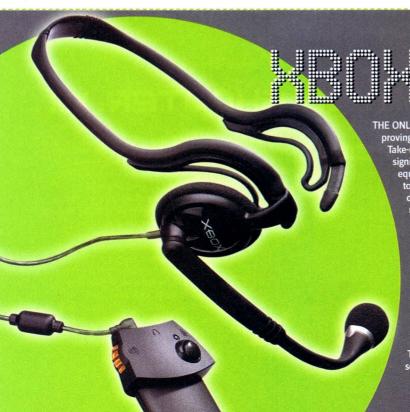
↑ So many places to hide, so many things to blow up...

It's been ages since the last Worms game, but now a new version is finally upon us. For those unfamiliar with the series, get ready for the ultimate exercise in back-stabbing. This game marks the series' entry into the 3D field. With you and your friends each in control of a team of

heavily armed cartoon worms, the objective is to be the last worm standing. The beauty of Worms is that it's turn-based, allowing plenty of time for alliances to be made and broken. Sure, there are Uzis, shotguns, Banana Bombs, exploding sheep and Holy Hand Grenades. But the real fun comes from the treachery. Gather your friends and family under the tree, and learn once and for all the

true nature of politics - it's every worm for himself!

## DRIVING: PROJECT GOTHAM RACING 2



THE ONLINE GAMING service for Xbox is proving to be popular - very popular.

Take-up rates worldwide seem to be significantly higher than those for the equivalent PS2 add-on, and it's easy to see why. Full voice support, downloadable extras, global rankings, instant messaging between people on your Friends List, all supported by a large and growing number of Xbox games. For \$99.95 for your first year, it's a deal that's hard to ignore, especially if you already have broadband. The real question is, what games will you want to play on Live? Glance over the shelves of your local gaming retailer, and you may be surprised. There are old favourites, of course, solid games like Mechassault that

**.....** 



were always going to shine online. There's Moto GP 2, and Project Gotham Racing 2, with engrossing racing action.

Plus there are plenty of bargains to be had. If you're waiting for *Halo* 2 (and who isn't?) then your savings won't be dented too much by Ghost Recon: Island Thunder. Awash with maps and modes, it retails for a mere \$49.95. Two addictive shooters, Return To Castle Wolfenstein and Soldier of Fortune II are available in a bundle - you can snare them both for \$129.95. Bargains abound you may be surprised.





## **AERIAL COMBAT: CRIMSON SKIES** If propeller-driven, biplane dog-fighting doesn't sound like your cup of tea, then you've been playing the wrong flight simulators. Crimson Skies: High Road to Revenge isn't some stale simulation of antique aircraft, but rather a gripping action adventure set in a fictional universe of exotic air travel. Swarms of fanciful flying machines do deadly battle in this alternate 1930s setting, trading hot lead and sassy insults. Playing a sarcastic, unshaven anti-hero type, you'll uncover a crackpot scheme to take over the world, and it's your job to make sure it doesn't happen in between dynamic missions of air-to-air insanity. Upgrade your planes, shoot down zeppelins, and if you've got it, you can challenge your buddies to high-flying duels over Xbox Live. A simple and fun shooter to pick up. ↑ Send enemies packing with your sharpshooting skills.

SO, YOU ENJOY the odd spot of karaoke. It's nothing to be ashamed of, especially now that you enjoy this extroverted hobby in the privacy of your own home. For a mere \$99.95, the Xbox Music Mixer is an all-in-one party music solution, with innovative karaoke technology at its core. With the supplied microphone, you can sing along to over a dozen included songs, including Love Shack, YMCA, and New York, New York. You can also download more tracks, for a modest fee, from Xbox Live.



## ↑ A big selection of music.

But what really makes this add-on shine is its ability to turn any CD audio track into a karaoke number. A special algorithm strips out the vocals, leaving just the instrumentals for you to sing over. Apparently this program isn't 100% reliable - sometimes it'll do something weird, like remove the drum section instead of the vocals. But that will only add to the spontaneity of the experience. This feature alone is sure to make the Music Mixer an instant favourite for awkward family get-togethers like the Christmas break.

But wait - there's more. You also get a comprehensive set of DJ tools for preparing sets of music. There are also customisable visuals for lending an authentic (if not pretentious) nightclub feel to your living room. You can import digital photos from your PC to enhance these effects, or for slideshows. Plus, you'll finally have the chance to download music files from your PC on to your Xbox, which is great for expanding your options for acquiring and organising your music library.

If you're the kind of person who

If you're the kind of person who likes to sing, party, or listen to music, then the Xbox Music Mixer could be a toy that's right up your alley.



↑ These vid clips will liven things up.



## TOP 20 GAMES OF THE YEAR

## **★STAR WARS: KNIGHTS OF** THE OLD REPUBLIC

9.5, Issue 20

## **\*SOUL CALIBUR 2**

9.4, Issue 19

## **\*BRUTE FORCE**

9.4. Issue 15

## \*TIMESPLITTERS 2

9.3. Issue 09

## \*RETURN TO CASTLE WOLFENSTEIN

9.2, Issue 15

## **★NFL 2K3**

9.2, Issue 14

## **\*UNREAL CHAMPIONSHIP**

9.2, Issue 10

## **★ NBA 2K3**

9.0. Issue 14

## \* PANZER DRAGOON ORTA

9.0, Issue 13

## **\*CAPCOM VS SNK 2 EO**

9.0, Issue 13

## **\*TONY HAWK 4**

9.0. Issue 09

## \* ROCKY

9.0, Issue 09

## **\* BURNOUT 2**

8.9, Issue 16

## **★ MOTO GP 2**

8.9, Issue 15

## \* PHANTASY STAR ONLINE EPISODE I & II

8.8, Issue 17

## **★ YAGER**

8.8, Issue 12

## **★ MORTAL KOMBAT, DEADLY** ALLIANCE

8.8, Issue 12



## \* INDYCAR SERIES

8.6, Issue 18

## \*WAKEBOARDING UNLEASHED

8.6, Issue 17

## **★ DEAD OR ALIVE XTREME BEACH VOLLEYBALL**

8.6, Issue 13

## -OTE ONETE

IF YOU'VE YET to join the DVD revolution, then the paltry \$49.95 price tag of the DVD remote unit will bring you into the 21st century of home video. There's no shortage of quality DVD content this Christmas: Terminator 3, The Two Towers Extended Edition, even the comedy styling of Sean Micallef are

finally available to own on DVD.

And if you've got money to burn, why not invest in a surround sound system?

You can get full Dolby Digital compatibility in a five-speaker set for as little as \$500 nowadays, and for a grand or more there are some quality deals to be had. Considering the

number of games that support Dolby 5.1, you may wish to invest in a sub-woofer as well. In home cinema, you get what you pay for - but it's usually money well spent.



## ↑ Cowboys? Now I've seen everything.

This skating title takes the *Tony Hawk* series in a bold new direction.

Moving away from pure skate park action, *T.H.U.G.* puts the player in a role-playing scenario. Starting out in the slums of America, your objective is to work your way through a skating career, impressing the real-life celebrities who make cameo

↑ Take to the suburbs in THUG.

appearances throughout the game. Obstacle courses include opportunities to get off your board and run around, lending a more realistic, *Jackass*-style sense to the whole affair. Novel challenges, a sick sense of humour, fully customisable skaters, all presented in the rock-solid *Tony Hawk* game engine that we've come to know and love.

## EXTREME SPORTS: TONY HAWK'S UNDERGROUND



**↑** Order your teammates around with the Xbox Communicator!

That headset you get with Xbox Live isn't just a tool for gaming online, no sir. Now you enrich your single player experience by talking to your virtual spec-ops teammates. And we don't mean the usual bouts of swearing you heap on your partners, we mean fully-functional voice-activated commands.

Dynamic mission planning lets you make best use of your multi-national strike team, with dozens of weapons at your disposal. There's Xbox Live support as well, and it's also worth mentioning that the graphics are superslick - top notch, really. Superb Al and grungy settings help to create the sense

of lingering menace, for which the Rainbow Six name has become renowned. Not to be missed if you liked Ghost Recon.

## COUNTER-TERRORISM: RAINBOW SIX 3



IN 1912 WILFRID M. VOYNICH FOUND A MYSTERIOUS CODED BOOK. 90 YEARS LATER IT HAS FINALLY BEEN DECIPHERED.

# BROKEN SWORD

SLEEPING DRAGON

THE ADVENTURE BEGINS WHEN THE MYSTERY IS SOLVED









PlayStation 2





## GTA: DOUBLE PACK #####



## CRIMINAL CRUISING OPTIONS >>>

BOTH GTA III and Vice City boast a huge amount of vehicles to liberate, use and abuse as you please. Cars, motorcycles, boats, trucks, helicopters and tanks are not only there for the taking, but they also handle with an extremely satisfying feel. The satisfaction is more about the vehicles feeling 'right' rather than 'good', as some rides handle like a brick.





Greater manoeuvrability and speed.



Choppers and boats for specialist jobs.



↑ Tired of your missions? Then just cruise around in your pimp-mobile to your favourite tunes from the Eighties!



↑ That ain't the most inconspicuous shirt to get around in...



↑ Vice City: your home away from home?

## "AS DARK AND BRUTAL AS THEY ARE A CORNERSTONE OF INTERACTIVE HILARITY"

## FOR THE UNINITIATED

For the few of you out there who have somehow managed to avoid playing either GTA III or Vice City on PS2 or PC, and can't see from the screenshots what all the fuss is about, we should clarify what it is you've been missing. Take one reckless freelance criminal, put him in a virtual city with lots of dubious employers, and add freedom of choice. Players are not only free to take whatever jobs they choose, but also how they'll do them. Want that sports car going down the street? Go grab it! Need a little more cash to buy that rocket launcher you've always wanted? Just go and mug someone for their cash!

This sort of freedom of choice has proven to be a winning formula of gameplay, and that's what's made both GTA III and Vice City the chart-topping phenomena that they are. With their slapstick presentation and in-your-face humour, the two games are as dark and brutal as they are a cornerstone of interactive hilarity.

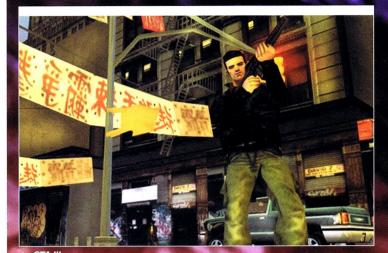
Of course, no game can offer total freedom. In the GTA games, players are essentially limited to stealing and driving cars, collecting and firing guns and running around on foot. All of these styles of play usually requires multiple game engines, which is a very big ask for game developers. But somehow, the GTA games manage to combine these different actions seamlessly, and in so many different ways, that these limited actions feel more like an endlessly branching set of options. For instance, if a drug dealer commissions you to go 'rub out' a certain person, but doesn't specify how, then artistic decisions like whether to rub them out with a bus, a sniper rifle a chainsaw are completely up to you.

To create the feel of being in a real city, Rockstar included a 'wanted' meter, representing how desperately the law are interested in arresting you at any given time. Cops don't come after you if they don't see you commit the crime, but they'll come in ever-increasing



## WHAT'S THE STORY

All that non-linear freedom would turn to aimless rubbish if there wasn't some sort of grand scheme to these two games, as well as a living, breathing city to set them in. Even though they look and feel very similar, GTA III and Vice City are worlds apart

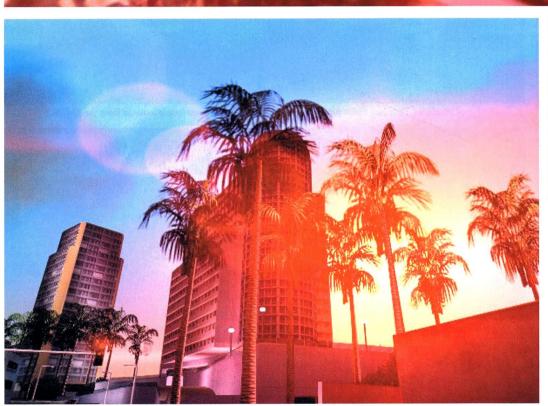


Set in 'Liberty City', a metropolis that bears an uncanny resemblance to Rockstar North's hometown NYC, GTA III tells a modern day crime tale. Our anti-hero is a guy who got stiffed by his girl on a robbery, and proceeds to get stiffed at various points by the various crime lords of the town. Even though the player's character doesn't have a name, nor does he speak at any point, his actions speak loud enough to tell a grippi



## **↑ VICE CITY**

Vice City was the original GTA concept in terms of its setting and inspiration, namely Miami, and the whole '80s crime movie phenomena. The player is Tommy Vercetti, an ex-con from Liberty City who gets sent down to Vice City to take over a new market by the mob. Big name actors lend their vocal talents to a colourful (albeit lurid neon) cast of characters to life to tell a story that involves hilarious parodies of Miami Vice, Scarface and Carlito's Way amongst others.



Vice City has all the neon hues that characterised the boofy hair and shoulders of the '80s.



↑ Tommy auditions for a role in Kill Bill.



↑ Trash that car! It's too long!

## RADIO CHATTER AND THE COMMENTS OF PASSING PEDESTRIANS ARE COMEDY GOLD"

numbers if you start taking civilian lives in their presence. Sometimes, just trying to get away from police helicopters, SWAT teams and tanks can be more intense (and memorable) than the missions themselves.

Just to ensure nobody takes any of the action too seriously, though, there are blatant comedic references and remarks throughout both games. Radio chatter and the comments of passing pedestrians are comedy gold, and even the death animations are too slapstick to be truly taken seriously. GTA is as much about laughs as it is about addictive gameplay.

## THE INEVITABLE IMPROVEMENTS

It's all well and good that the Xbox is finally getting a pair of great games that everyone's been wanting, but as owners of a console that has technically superior hardware, we're also accustomed to getting better versions of any multiplatform game. Fortunately, Rockstar is well aware of this, and they've

implemented many impressive improvements over the original PS2 versions.

Cosmetically, on top of the higher texture detail, there are greater draw distances for buildings and computer-controlled vehicles. This creates a more convincing sense of space and eliminates the frustration that comes from not being able to see oncoming vehicles. There's a lot more swirling debris as well. These are subtle details, but they create a better illusion of an interactive world.

WHY SO LONG? The Xbox version of the GTA series was delayed for so long due to an exclusivity agreement between Rockstar and Sony. There's no doubt that this was one of the PS2's most important games, and that Sony aren't happy about it being on Xbox.



↑ There are virtually no limits to what you can steal, destroy, shoot at or drive in the GTA series. This helicopter is one of the cooler bonuses in Vice City.



↑ She's clearly never heard of grazed knees and elbows...



A view from the road-kill cam.

## ROCKSTAR HAS SENSIBLY CHOSEN NOT TO MESS WITH THE FORMULA"

Other features that will make the Xbox version of GTA the best there is are specular lighting, improved particle effects, more polygons and new reflection effects for the vehicles. The cut-scenes will look better than ever, with higher poly counts for all major characters. And for the first time in a GTA game on any system, in-game dialogue will be completely lip-synched. Even the way the game can be displayed has been improved too, with a widescreen option there for anyone with a means to view the format. It's ironic, isn't it, that a game that has served the PS2 so well will go on to highlight how the Xbox's hardware can achieve better results?

The original soundtrack of GTA III and the licensed retro tunes of Vice City have both been outstanding, and even though we doubt many of you will want to do so, if you have the desire to commit crimes to your own collection of music, you can. As far as we understand things, each soundtrack that's saved on on your Xbox Hard Drive will appear as a CD (or tape in Vice City) that can be played in your in-game car stereo. While options like these are always welcome, we honestly recommend that you don't make the mistake of using your own custom soundtracks from the start. Why? Because you'll miss out on hours of hilarious radio chatter already stored in the game. It's an element of the GTA series that has always been well received, and it would be criminal to knowingly and

wilfully miss out on it. On the other hand, if Rockstar manages to include a means to replace individual tracks from the existing radio stations, we'll have the best of both worlds.

The cherry on the cake for audio options is the option to play the games in full Dolby Digital 5.1 surround sound. Not only does it sound incredibly cool, but it'll actually prove very handy when you're surrounded by multiple cars, thugs, bystanders and so on, and you need to figure out quickly who represents a threat.

Rockstar also claims to have brought down the load times dramatically, which is brilliant news for anyone who's ever tried driving between towns in the PS2 version. It's not a big issue, but it's one less thing to disturb the flow of play.

So how about gameplay improvements? Well, there's a reason both of these games have dominated PS2 sales charts thus far, and Rockstar has sensibly chosen not to mess with the formula. After all, it's worked so well for them. Both titles are packed with enough action, attitude and wry humour to keep gamers busy for many months, so there's no need for new material in a pack that includes both games.

News of the impending arrival of *Grand Theft Auto Double Pack* on Xbox is about as pleasant a surprise as any of us could really be hoping for. The only problem now is that there's yet another must-have release to pick up this holiday season... which isn't a bad sort of problem to have.







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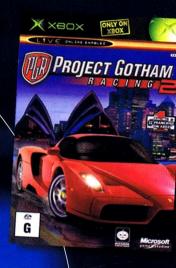
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CLOSING DATE: 30.12.2003 ORDER CODE: OXM22

## WHY DO SO MANY PEOPLE







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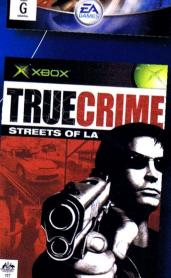
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## REVIEWING SETUP



WE REVIEW games on a 32 inch PHILIPS Matchline III digital TV. As well as a brilliant widescreen picture, this beauty boasts Dolby Digital surround sound and has wireless FM rear speakers. Apart from giving us all TV-insecurity when we think of our humble sets back home, it means we've got the best environment in which to play and test every Xbox game to the limit. For more info check out www.philips.com.au.

## SCORE KEY

8.5-10.0

THE XBOX ELITE - ONE OF THE VERY BEST AVAILABLE

7.5-8.4

A TOP QUALITY RELEASE THAT'S WELL WORTH HAVING

5.5-7.4

STILL WORTH CONSIDERING, BUT HAS SOME FLAWS

5.1-5.4

AN AVERAGE TITLE WITH NOTHING OUTSTANDING TO OFFER

2.6-5.0

A BAD GAME, AND ONE YOU REALLY SHOULDN'T BOTHER WITH

0.0-2.5

CALLING SUCH A RANCID STINKER A 'GAME' IS LIBELLOUS

## THE TRUTH

WE ONLY REVIEW the finished Australian version of a game - the version that you will be paying for and playing. The US or Japanese release will often differ from its Australian counterpart. By sticking to this policy, we will never mislead you by reviewing imported games or preview versions.

Microsoft has no access to, or influence over, the Official Australian Xbox Magazine. The company supplies us with screenshots, info and games before any other magazine. We don't do deals with Microsoft, or any other publisher, to get access to finished games. As a result, we're in the best position to give you what you deserve - balanced, objective and accurate reviews on which to base your buying decisions.

## THE VERDICT

## POWER

How technically adept is the game? Does it make proper use of the Xbox? How impressive is it?

## STYLE

How stylish is the game? How well is each aspect of it designed? How good does it look and feel?

## **IMMERSION**

How involving is the game? Will hours fly by in minutes? Are the controls instinctive or awkward?

## LIFESPAN

How much is there to the game? How long will you keep coming back to it? Is it worth the money?

## GOOD POINTS

WE'LL SUM UP SOME OF THE GAME'S BEST AND MOST EXCITING POINTS FOR YOU HERE

## BAD POINTS

...AND LET YOU KNOW WHAT'S PARTICULARLY BAD ABOUT IT HERE

## SUMMARY

This is our overall opinion of the game, condensing the review into one easy-to-digest

OFFICIAL AUSTRALIAN XBOX MAGAZINE **SCORE** 

## WHAT OUR BADGES MEAN

AT THE START of a review, along with the Game Information box telling you who's made the game, when it's out, how many people can play and the official website address, you may see a badge or two. This is what they stand for:



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## ON THE DISC: PLAYABLE

A playable trial version of the game is on our cover disc.



## SEE IT ON THE DISC: MOVIE

Watch the game in action with a movie on our cover disc.

## THE TEAM



KEVIN CHELING !!

OXM'S WHEELER and dealer has picked up the strange habit of eating cereal out of a palm-sized silver marshmallow tin. This week, it's choc-malt

NOW PLAYING: Worms 3D, KOTOR A bigger bowl.



DAN TOOSE //

A RARE THING, Dan

actually had a very

write his playguide

NOW PLAYING: Nothing. He wants his Rainbow Six 3 back. CHRISTMAS WISH:

Rainbow Six 3

difficult time letting go of the Rainbow Six 3 disc,

which Ralph needed to

IAMES COTTEE !!

FOR THE FIRST time in four years, our X-Media Editor actually cut his

hair. Short. And it's curly,

too! It looks like the days

of long-haired gits on this

NOW PLAYING: XIII,

Worms 3D CHRISTMAS WISH:

Beans for a bean bag.

MATT WOLFS // TECH EDITOR

MATT'S BEEN digging up a lot of dirt on the sp for the next Xbox like a crazed scientist. Between that and NFL, he soothes his soul by lifting weights

NOW PLAYING: ESPN NFL Football 2004, Madden NFL 2004 CHRISTMAS WISH: For the Bills to win.



RALPH PANEBIANCO // WRITER

RALPH PLAYED Rainbow Six 3 for so long that, in his words, "My brain stopped commu with my fingers". He then collapsed into a deep slumber for 14 hours.

NOW PLAYING: LOTR: Return of the King. More hours in the day.



BEN TALBOT // PRODUCER

**DURING A pub lunch,** OXM's resident salad dodger leaned over to Owen and asked what a leek tasted like. "It's a bit like an onion, isn't it?'

NOW PLAYING: Otogi, Brute Force, PGR2. CHRISTMAS WISH: Stronger condition



GAVIN OGDEN // NEWS EDITOR

GAV CONFESSED he used to carry around a Tango doll called Gotan in his man-bag, who'd secretly persuade him to do naughty stuff. What?

**NOW PLAYING:** KOTOR, Colin 04. CHRISTMAS WISH: A Voodoo Vince doll



ART DIRECTOR

OXM'S USUALLY quiet art guru broke her silence at the sight of James' new haircut - which speaks volumes for his new look Shall we update his profile photo?

Return of the King. **CHRISTMAS WISH:** A Stila traincase

## THE PICK OF THE GAMES

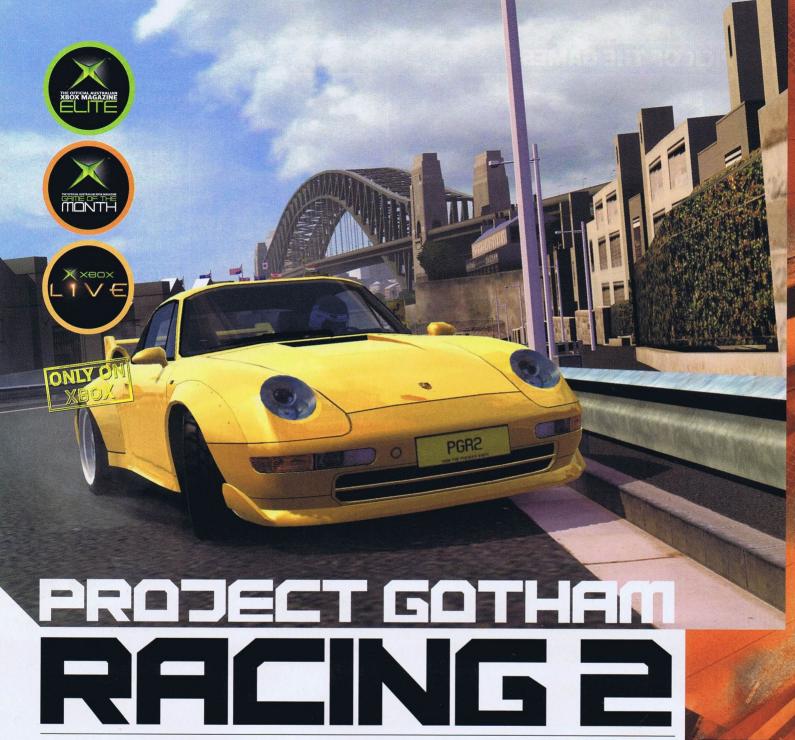
## MREVIEWS







>>NEXT MONTH: FOR ISSUE 23, we've got Grabbed by the Ghoulies, True Crime: Streets of LA, Broken Sword, Metal Arms, Backyard Wrestling, Gladius, ESPN NFL Football, Hunter the Reckoning: Redeemer, Star Wars Jedi Knight: Jedi Academy and a whole bunch more lined up for review... that's assuming, of course, that everything goes to plan.



It's a new sense of 'style' that brings more than just a fresh coat of polish.

WORDS: ANDY IRVINE

GAMEINFORMATION

**DEVELOPER: BIZARRE CREATIONS** 

PUBLISHER: MICROSOFT

RELEASE DATE: 28 NOV 2003

PLAYERS: 1-4 SPLIT-SCREEN;

1-8 SYSTEM LINK AND XBOX LIVE WEBSITE: WWW.BIZARRECREATIONS.COM

TAKE A ride through exotic locales as the best street racer

shifts up a gear.

VERYBODY LIKES to drive fast cars. Deep down, there's a Michael Schumacher in all of us, fighting to rev their way out. But although it may be the most prestigious, F1 isn't

exactly the most exciting form of motor racing. No way baby, it's all about the streets.

Aside from the obvious doof-doof-doofmobiles that cruise around Sydney's west, give



↑ Narrow streets are pretty unforgiving.

anybody a clear stretch of road and like bored housewives on their way back from the school run, they'll get delusions of grandeur that they're the next Penelope Pitstop. But we're not advocating tearing round your local town centre at ridiculous speeds, because salvation is found in the form of Project Gotham Racing 2, blasting onto Xbox with the hearty roar of a V8.

As every lad in a souped-up XR2 knows, when it comes to driving it's all



↑ Bumper-cam makes things look speedier.

>> HEY, WATCH OUT! There's now a realistic damage feature that ns and oled bonnets a all par for the course (if Phil's driving).

>> CAMERA ACTION One of the Kudos challenges involves driving as fast as you can along a designated stretch of road, thus setting off a speed camera. There's no such thing as points on your licence here.

## A VROOM WITH A VIEW Take the scenic route around a host of exotic cities

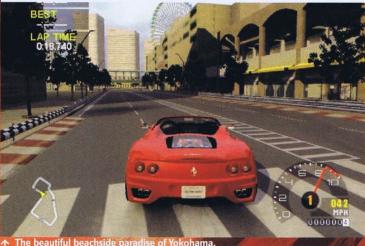
THERE'S A certain glitz and glamour about street racing, and we don't mean supermodels hanging round your garage. Check out this selection of exotic locales you'll take in on your travels, all perfectly replicated in glorious detail. It's a tough life, this jet set existence.



↑ Check out a sun-drenched Barcelona.



Moscow's Red Square is wide enough to drive a tank through!





♠ Stockholm, complete with monorail and barge ships.

>> STAMP DUTY As well as personalising your number plate to spell out what you want (OUTMYWAY in OXM's case), there's the option to choose which distinctive region your plate relates to. We went for Washington DC.

>> YO DI! There's a choice of several different radio stations, all with reallife DJs spinning 'racing tunes'. Alternatively, put on a pre-set CD or even better, rip your personal soundtrack from the Xbox hard drive

## AS EVERY LAD IN A SOUPED UP XR2 KNOWS, WHEN IT COMES TO DRIVING, IT'S ALL ABOUT BEING STYLISH"

about being stylish (ahem). This was where the original PGR (Issue 01, 8.9) brought innovation to the racing genre; that driving with flair and style was just as important as fast lap times. This feature has been given something of a polish in PGR2, in fact something akin to a vat full of Turtlewax all over the bonnet. The whole game pretty much revolves around earning Kudos points, through a variety of stylish driving moves, like power-sliding round corners, drafting (slip-streaming), good racing lines and completing a clean section of track. Link several moves together for a nice Kudos combo, but keep your eyes on the road because causing damage to your car, either from other vehicles or the surroundings, wipes these combos out.

They say patience is a virtue, but for all you unvirtuous types there's an Instant Action option that allows you to jump straight into an arcade-style



↑ It's too bad road under the real Harbour Bridge is loaded with islands and obstacles!



## Forget speed, looking good is what counts here

YOU NEED KUDOS points to unlock all the tasty motors in the garage, so follow these simple steps to vehicular heaven. There's a fine line between keeping a good racing line and pranging your pride and joy into the crash barriers, so go easy on the gas when approaching those hairpins. Then watch the points rack up.







↑ Slipstream behind someone to 'draft' past them.

↑ Sneak inside for a double overtake



Pesky council workers...



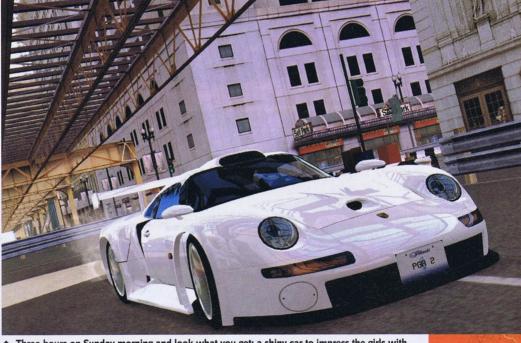
↑ Chug-mobiles are available to race in.



Night races are common in PGR2.



↑ Multiplayer beckons up to four friends.



↑ Three hours on Sunday morning and look what you get: a shiny car to impress the girls with.

## HOW DOES THE GAME PLAY? WELL, BLOODY BRILLIANTLY, TO BE HONEST"

race for a quick-speed fix. However, look under the bonnet of this beauty and you'll find a huge and fulfilling career mode driving her along. Take your pick from Kudos World Series, Arcade Racing or Time Attack. The former two help build up Kudos points; the latter is for pride.

The World Series contains 14 different classes of car, ranging from Sports Compaq (Minis, Focuses), SUVs (BMW X5s) up to good ol' American muscle cars and the fabled Ultimate series (Enzo Ferraris and the like). A string of challenges must be completed in each class before advancing on to the next, and a handy option is that the player decides the difficulty of each challenge. Varying amounts of Kudos points, related to the difficulty setting are awarded on completion of the task, then these in turn are exchanged for tokens which allow you to buy

Now that's all the technical stuff out the way, so how does the game actually play? Well, bloody brilliantly to be honest. It's always hard for programmers to get the right combination of speed, handling and realism, but we're pleased to say Bizarre has got things bang on the money. Each model of car has distinctly different handling abilities, and it's surprisingly realistic for an 'arcade' racer. How would you know, I hear you cry? Well, from personal experience of Mini Coopers, VW Beetles, TVRs and Z4s this reviewer can attest to the realism, and whilst he's yet to rag a Ferrari round a circuit, he'd put money on it feeling something like the way PGR2 portrays. Any doubts about speed are put too rest too: when you're going balls out at 140mph, believe you me, it really feels like it.

In the vain society that we live in, looks are everything, and PGR2 comes off as the popular jock at school who always got the cute girl. The cars are amazingly detailed and realistic, and there are 105 to unlock. Take a trip to the garage to see which models are presently unlocked, and just like an arranged marriage, feast your eyes for the first time upon the veiled beauties within that have just become available. Real-time lighting is used to great effect, both in the reflections off the cars' bodywork and the reclining shadows they cast in the setting sun. 



>>> DON'T MESS prisoners, and are both e and ruthless As well as driving defensively, preventing you from passing they'll ram you from behind and spin your car off, just when ou're about to post a fastest lap time.

>>> RETAIL THERAPY Before you gain access to all the top-notch motors, take a look round the virtual showroom, where you can take each little beauty out for a spin on the test track.

## **DREAM MACHINES**Unlock a fleet of minxy motors

UNLESS YOU'RE a film star, rock star, millionaire entrepreneur or international playboy, chances you won't ever drive, or be able to afford, the car of your dreams. Luckily, PGR2 allows you to do just that. Feast your eyes on these little beauties. Just be careful - you don't want to look like a twat wrecking a \$300,000 Ferarri!



The TVR Tamora. It's a bit special.



↑ The brand new Enzo Ferrari.



♠ An odd-looking Lotus roadster.



↑ The sleek Ferrari F60 Spyder.



↑ The classic Ferrari 275 GTB.



↑ The Porsche 356 - a gentleman's favourite.

## THE ENVIRONMENTS, TOO, LOOK GORGEOUS, WITH II CITIES AROUND THE WORLD ALL ACCURATELY AND PHOTOREALISTICALLY RECREATED"



↑ The separation between winning and losing can come down to mere inches.

The environments, too, look simply gorgeous. Take in 11 different cities around the world, all accurately and photorealistically recreated. Each has its own unique atmosphere and style, and you'll spend more time looking at the scenery than the road. Not good when approaching a hairpin at over 100mph, or taking a shunt from an overaggressive Al driver.

So single-player mode seemingly has everything a budding racer needs, but multiplayer makes the considerable racing shift from second to fifth gear without even breaking a sweat. As well as split-screen action for four

players, eight mates can now enjoy a bit of fullscreen action via System Link, a welcome addition. Full Live compatibility is also available, with up to eight players simultaneously racing, as well as leaderboards and downloadable 'ghosts' to race against and improve your singleplayer ratings.

It's a tough old market out there, where racing games are two for a penny on Xbox (not literally, that would be ridiculous), but Project Gotham Racing 2 returns as the leader of the pack (broom broom), storming over the finish line whilst other racers stall at the grid. Outstanding.



Astounding graphics and hugely detailed tracks demonstrate the speed and power of Xbox

## STYLE

Gorgeous to look at, even better to play. There's a great sense of individuality to each city.

## **IMMERSION**

Instant race for a quick-fix, but the Career mode is intuitive and addictive.

## LIFESPAN

A hefty single-player mode, complemented by virtually limitless enjoyment on Xbox Live

## XBOX LIVE.

 VISUALLY AMAZING. + LOADS OF CARS.

GOOD POINTS

- **◆** HEAD-TO-HEAD ON
- + SENSE OF SPEED AND REALISTIC HANDLING.
- BAD POINTS



THE DRIVERS ARE A BIT AGGRESSIVE

## SUMMARY

The most complete and bestoking street racer steals pole position - the consummate and definitive driving experience.

>>> PREVIOUSLY: Exclusive Access - Issue 21

>>> COMING SOON: Hints & cheats



## TEAM EQNUING >>> Here are some of our fave mission objectives.

Defusing bombs is a common occurrence in the world of anti-terrorism. Just make sure you don't shoot it while storming the room.

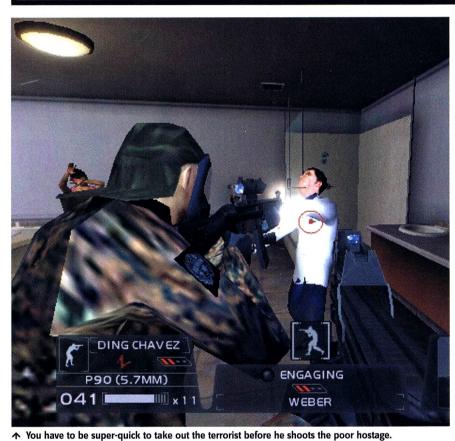


Defending hostages is a mission in itself.
Especially when armed gunmen are hiding around every corner. Don't shoot the wrong ones now...

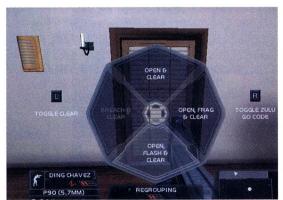


Once you've stormed the building and secured the area, it's time to cuff any hostages you find so they don't run away.





★ Hiding in the smoke doesn't work against heat vision.



♠ Bring up the command menu and select an order.

## >>> BONUS INFO

>>> ORDER OF THE DAY
Via the Voice
Communicator or
through a fairly
streamlined controller
interface, the Rainbow
team can be ordered to
do numerous things,
from breaching doors
to covering a location.
Commands can be
strung together, and
also executed later on
with a 'Zulu' code.

## IT'S LIKE SAM FISHER ARMED HIMSELF TO THE TEETH AND BROUGHT THREE BUDDIES TO GO KICK SOME BUTT''

quarter encounters. For solo gamers, there's a campaign mode of fourteen missions that tell the tale of terrorist attempts to block the oil trade between Venezuela and the US in the year 2007. Many of the missions are set in the US and Venezuela, but some are in distant lands like Croatia and Canada.

Unlike other tactical shooters, *Rainbow Six 3* puts players in control of just one operative of the Rainbow team, Domingo "Ding" Chavez. Previous *Rainbow Six* games have been about planning your approach with a complicated map of the mission location, co-ordinating several teams at once, with the option to switch between individual characters once the action is set in motion. *Rainbow Six 3*, however, goes

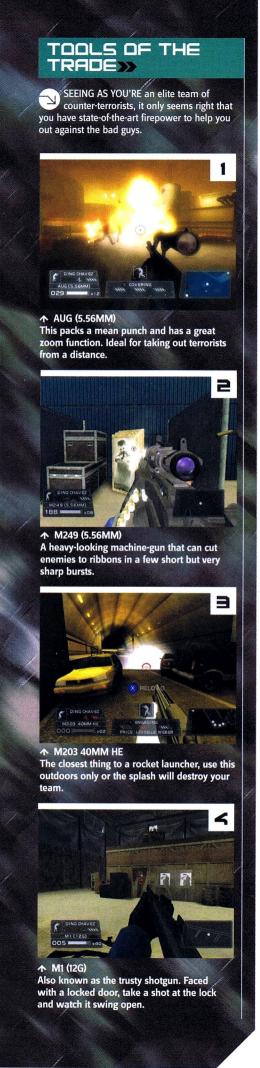
straight from the briefing to the mission and fixing the player behind one set of eyes, which is far more spontaneous and immersive. This is immediate response work, where tactics must be made up on the fly. It's like Sam Fisher got sick of sneaking around, armed himself to the teeth and brought three buddies to go kick some butt.

Each of the missions in *Rainbow Six 3* primarily involve moving through built up urban areas, mansions, factories or installations, where doors and corners serve as tactical chokepoints. Objectives include rescuing hostages, disarming bombs and taking out hostiles.

Borrowing visual effects from other games may not be the most original way to make a game, but taking the outstanding light and

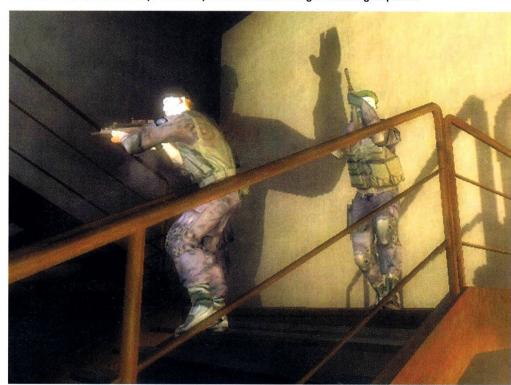
shadowing features from fellow Tom Clancy game *Splinter Cell* has done wonders for *Rainbow Six* 3. The soft, natural lighting helps the game look much prettier than any of its PC predecessors. The character models are not ultra-detailed, but when combined with the animation, lighting and realistic shadows, *Rainbow Six* 3 is a pure joy to watch. You'll also find that the little touches, like passing through a curtain of water that's spraying from a broken pipe will convey a truly convincing sense of atmosphere.

Just as impressive, but in more subtle ways, are the ambient surround sound effects. There's no room for music in counter-terrorism, but there is for radio chatter; and the odd quip from Ding's comrades keeps things lively.





↑ Check out the size of that scope on the sniper rifle. It's almost as big as that savage explosion.



↑ Judging from the shadow on the wall, someone's about to be arrested Rainbow Six-style. Ouch!

## THE ODD QUIP FROM DING'S COMRADES KEEPS THINGS LIVELY"

The controls are commendably streamlined. Some actions are intuitively stacked on one button to group similar tasks together. For example, tapping the left trigger will reload the weapon being held, while holding the trigger will bring up a weapon-select screen that even pauses the game while you make your decision. Ordering the squad to a location, or to interact with an object, is as easy as looking at the desired target and hitting 'A'. However, there's an easier way to do these things: through the Voice Communicator.

It cannot be underestimated just how much the use of the Voice Communicator enhances the *Rainbow Six 3* experience.

Rainbow Six's prior incarnations on PC have been fiddly by nature, not surprisingly because the keyboard interface allows for a large number of buttons with which to control the team. This presented Ubi Soft Montreal with an issue that they have not only tackled, but knocked clear out of play: their use of the Voice Communicator to simulate the radio headwear that counter-terrorists would use has added an amazing sense of realism to a genre that has often felt like a very detached, complicated experience. This device also serves as a natural game interface tool that lets you simply say what you want to do, rather than having to memorise a multitude of button combinations. With



>>SAY WHAT?

Voice recognition isn't perfect. Sometimes, orders have to be spoken several times, and quite loudly at that. It really breaks the mood of sneaking around when you have to speak out in a clear voice. It's still an amazing feature to have in the game, of course.

## RAINBOW SIX 3 ZZ





↑ Meat-packing was Phil's first job. He loved it!



↑ Time to switch to trusty heat vision.



↑ Reload and fire another into his stomach.

↑ Whenever you get the chance to shoot an explosives container - do it and burn it all. Now that's tactics!

## "RAINBOW SIX 3 REMOVES THE FIDDLY NONSENSE OF ITS PREDECESSORS"

some commands involving as many as four parts (eg. Open, flash and clear on Zulu), this makes complex orders much simpler to give.

Naturally, the Voice Communicator is infinitely more versatile in multiplayer, as human players can understand more complicated commands, and take more complicated courses of action. You can't tell a computer controlled teammate to use a certain weapon when firing, but you can tell a buddy over Xbox Live that they should whip out their grenade launcher and where they should fire.

That said, *Rainbow Six 3*'s friendly Al is still quite excellent, with the Rainbow team doing the smart thing in most cases. Order them into the middle of a road and they'll move to the sides, taking cover behind whatever they can find. They're not three idiots in need of baby-sitting, and they'll frequently save your bacon from enemies before you even spot them. Enemy Al is also impressive, using cover sensibly, throwing grenades when you're sitting tight behind cover... at a higher difficulty, the bad guys more responsive and deadly accurate.

Despite how wondrously immersive the visuals, headset and gameplay are, there are moments in *Rainbow Six 3* that spoil the illusion of reality. Being a tactical shooter, you want to be able to implement your own plans to overcome each given situation, but sometimes the game simply doesn't allow for this, even though what you want to do would be dead simple. For example, in one mission, Ding and team-mate Webber find themselves having to guard two hostages in a courtyard surrounded by balconies as they wait for

a chopper to lift them out. Naturally, waves of terrorists assault the courtyard from the ground and the balconies. The sensible course of action would be to take cover in the corridor you just came through. However, there is no means of telling the hostages to go inside, and thus, no way to take what is clearly the most sensible course of action. It's near impossible to complete this particular encounter without Webber going down, but fortunately, fallen comrades are simply deemed incapacitated rather than dead.

Another, more serious shortcoming is that it's nearly impossible to tell where you're being shot from at times. In a game where reacting to that first bullet that skims past your shoulder is crucial, it's a tad frustrating to not be able to to react instantly. Red flashes on the map in the corner of the HUD simply don't cut it in the thick of things. In multiplayer, this will genuinely piss some people off. Single-player, at least, offers enough of a margin of error for you to find where the buggers are.

But these moments of frustration are just that: moments. Even after retrying a mission countless times before succeeding, this is the sort of compulsive experience that will have folks leaping in to the next briefing right away. This is something the *Rainbow Six* games never offered on PC, simply because the simulation has always been made as complex as possible. *Rainbow Six 3* removes the fiddly nonsense of its predecessors, leaving Xbox owners with an authentic, atmospheric and action-packed counter-terrorism experience that simply cannot be missed..



## POWER

Borrowing visual effects from Splinter Cell, this is, unsurprisingly, a drop-dead gorgeous game.

## STYLE

It feels more like a FPS with friendly faces than a typical tactical shooter.

## IMMERSION

With the Voice Communicator adding to the experience, you'll forget this is 'just a game'.

## LIFESPAN

After mastering the missions, multiplayer will keep any Xbox Live user coming back for more.

## OOOD POINTS VOICE COMM SUITS THE GAME PERFECTLY. EXCELLENT AI

## AND TACTICS. \* IMPRESSIVE VISUALS.

## BAD POINTS

HARD TO GAUGEINCOMING FIRE.DESTROYS SOCIAL LIFE.

## SUMMARY

No other tactical shooter immerses you into the role of high counter-terrorism like *Rainbow Six* 3. Brilliant.

OFFICIAL AUSTRALIAN XBOX MAGAZINE SCORE

- >>> PREVIOUSLY: Exclusive Access, Issue 19
- >>> COMING SOON: Hints & cheats



↑ The change to suburban settings doesn't change what you're here to do: skate.



↑ Ahh... lemme guess... laundry day?



↑ Hanging on to a cop car? Phwoar!



↑ "Me? A sellout? What gave you the idea?"

## TONY HAWK'S UNDERGROUND

The formula ain't broke, but Neversoft is going to fix it anyway.

WORDS: RALPH PANEBIANCO

GAME INFORMATION

DEVELOPER: NEVERSOFT

PUBLISHER: **ACTIVISION** 

RELEASE DATE: OUT NOW

PLAYERS: 1-4

WEBSITE: WWW.ACTIVISION.COM



HONE YOUR skills and become the world's best skateboarder. ONY HAWK MEETS Grand
Theft Auto? Not quite, but it's clear from the outset that this is a significantly changed
Tony Hawk. It's not a complete overhaul, though; the gameplay that we know and love remains almost untouched, and the brilliant trick system is largely the same. The difference is in the way the game objectives are disseminated to us - through a story mode that follows your skater's rise from a suburban bum to a skating star. It's incredibly well done, and succeeds in breathing new life into the franchise.

Let's be realistic though; these changes needed to happen. The *Tony Hawk* series, now four games old, was starting to lose its appeal. While each new sequel was more polished and expansive than the one before it, the formula of 'complete X objectives to unlock Y levels' was growing old, and even the loyalists were

beginning to stray from the flock. Neversoft realised that fans could no longer be staved off with new levels and a new combo-link trick, and so the concept for *THUG* was born; a *Tony Hawk* title that explored not just the 'how to' of skating but the culture surrounding the sport. Players now have a broader range of concerns than just nailing grinds, like impressing the pros, gaining sponsorship, keeping out of trouble with the law, dealing with spiteful competition and filming demo tapes to further your career. Of course, you still have to skate to accomplish all of this, but the story that unfolds with the completion of these tasks makes for an infinitely more enthralling experience.

Unlike its predecessors, THUG does not give you the option to select a pro skater to use in the Story Mode. Instead, you create your own rising star and customise their bodily features, attire and fashion accessories to suit your tastes.

## **BONUS** INFO

## >>> CUSTOM FEATURES

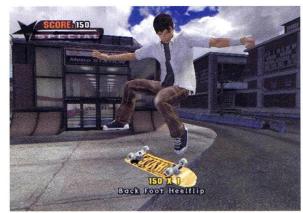
The customisation options in *Tony Hawk's Underground* are so comprehensive, you can give your player a green afro, a monocle and top hat for the digified look; there's even 40 different back packs to select from!

## >>> NO RELATION

This latest Tony Hawk game isn't the only new release to feature "Underground" in its title. Electronic Arts' Need for Speed Underground is also on its way, and it doesn't have any relationship to THUG at all. They just both decided to stop putting numbers at the end of their sequel titles. Quite a coincidence, really.

## TONY HAWK'S UNDERGROUND **ZAR**E

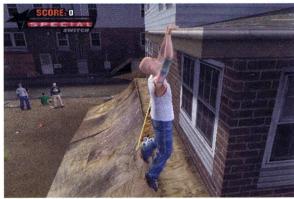
## MREVIEWS



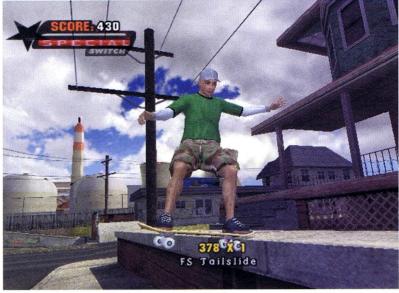
↑ Too fashionable to be practical for skating.



↑ Some parks have a similar look to the previous Hawk games.



↑ Climbing up rooftops opens up new opportunities.



♠ Practice skating around your own neighbourhood.

## "SOME OF THE BEST LEVEL DESIGN SEEN IN A TONY HAWK GAME YET"

Once out the door of your New Jersey home, the camera pans around your neighbourhood to showcase the first of nine levels. Going beyond anything the previous Tony Hawk games achieved, THUG's levels are brimming with objects that are just aching to be defaced by your tracks. The size of the levels remains much the same as in Tony Hawk 4, but the combo opportunities have increased ten-fold, with some of the best level design seen in a Tony Hawk game yet. With sublimely atmospheric locations that range from urban San Francisco to exotic Hawaii, every level has a unique set of lines to skate on to keep you occupied as you complete the game's various objectives.

"Various", however, doesn't mean what it use to when talking about *Tony Hawk* objectives. Some of *THUG*'s new features include the ability to drive cars and the freedom to get off your board and walk around at will. Now, before you get your hopes up, you cannot hijack cars and drive

them around like in *Grand Theft Auto*. In fact, you can only drive cars in a handful of the game's 128 objectives; and when you do, it's kind of lame. The driving missions are too easy, and the cars handle like a hovercraft.

The ability to get off your deck, however, is far more interesting. Hitting the black button at any time will plant your skater's feet firmly on the ground, allowing you to walk, jump and climb to previously inaccessible areas. It's a simple feature that Neversoft has used to surprisingly good effect. In one of the early missions, local junkies have stolen some skate gear from your sponsor's shop, and you must rely on a few stealthy moves to sneak up behind them and get it back. Better still, players can use this new feature to link their tricks. While mid combo, characters can hop off their boards, run over to a new area and then jump into a new grind to continue the same combo. It really needs to be seen in action to be appreciated - it's a perfect addition to the combo link family.

## CREATIVE OPTIONS Yes, th

## Yes, there's life after the single-player mode!

Like the previous Tony Hawk games, THUG offers players a swag of options to prolong the game's lifespan. On top of being able to create your own skater, you can now create your own in-game goals, create your own tricks, and create your own skate park.



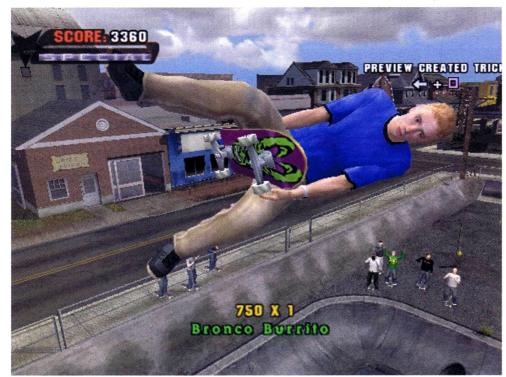
↑ Create-A-Goal: make life harder for yourself.



↑ Create-A-Trick: get your fingers in a twist.



↑ Create-A-Park: go nuts with ramps and rails.



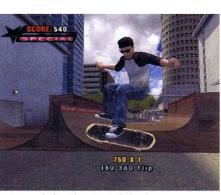
That's a skateboard, not a bike!



↑ Back to the 1980s with you!



↑ Seems everyone's trying to stomp on their boards.



↑ Erm... dude... the pipe is behind you.



↑ It'd be a shame if he slipped over...



↑ Skateboards, also useful as a fashion accessory.

## "WHY ON EARTH IS THE KBOK VERSION OF THUG NOT PLAYABLE ON LIVE?"

Visually THUG is noticeably better than its predecessors. Every level is teaming with life, looking more like a real environment than anything any other Tony Hawk game has looked before. The tell-tale pastel colour scheme of the franchise has been enhanced by some beautifully detailed texture work, which is just perfect for setting the scene in colourful Hawaii and sleazy Tampa. Perhaps the biggest graphical improvement can be seen in the character models, which have evolved with the introduction of the story mode. The faces have benefited from much greater detail, with facial hair, wrinkles, freckles and pimples adding that little human touch to any encounters you have with other characters.

As always, Neversoft has outdone itself by providing fans with an unparalleled audio feast. THUG boasts a soundtrack containing over 25 years of music from over 70 artists, which is a line-up that completely dwarfs any previous outing. It's more music than you can ollie over; and with bands like Kiss, Jane's Addiction, Jurassic 5 and NOFX, gamers will be forgiven for leaving the game running instead of listening to their usual CD collection.

Other little classy bits in THUG include a new create-a-trick mode now allows players to edit existing tricks and create totally new ones by tinkering with rotation angle, speed and sequence order. It's a little tedious to figure out, but with practice it's possible to create some

very sweet moves. The create-a-deck and the create-a-park modes have also been greatly enhanced, allowing players to refine and personalise their Hawk experience even further.

Woe betide any fans looking for any serious multiplayer improvements. For some unexplained reason, Tony Hawk still does not support 4 players simultaneously unless you use a system link. Honestly, it's not that hard to do it's featured in many first-generation Xbox games. But worse still, why on earth is the Xbox version of THUG not playable on Live when it's playable online on PS2? Why are we being limited to a two-player experience for our multiplayer kicks? No offence, Neversoft, but this sucks, and no amount of corporate sweet-talk or rationalisation will convince us of anything other than the fact that Xbox fans have been royally screwed. What can we say? If you produce an inferior product, expect an inferior score.

Despite these painful shortcomings, the excellent single-player game remains a wholly satisfying experience. THUG is not as radically different to past incarnations as many fans would have liked, but the changes are substantial enough for us to declare that Neversoft has come through with the goods, albeit without Live functionality. Every technical element of the game has been noticeably tightened up, and the new story mode has provided a new incentive for fans to keep on skating.



## POWER

Classic Tony action in all its glory. The story mode is a brilliant addition as well

## STYLE

Grittier levels, bigger soundtracks and more attitude than ever. This game's got a lot of attitude.

## **IMMERSION**

Crappy multiplayer, but there are plenty of create-a-something options to toy with

## LIFESPAN

Not as long as fans might have hoped. It's still the same game despite the bells and whistles.

## GOOD POINTS \* STORY MODE. \* 70+ BANDS ON THE SOUNDTRACK. \* GETTING OFF THE ROARD BAD POINTS MULTIPLAYER. A BIT EASY. IT'S NOT REALLY. MUCH OF A CHANGE.. SUMMARY

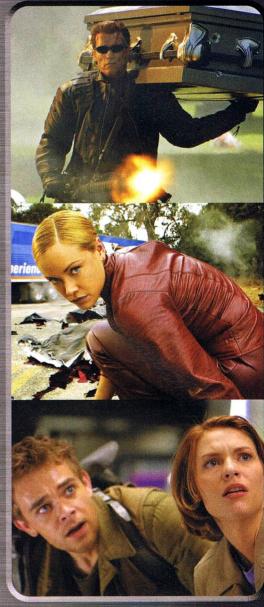
Not short of the mark, but not as revolutionary as we'd all expected. A superlative skating

IAL AUSTRALIAN XBOX MAGAZINE **SCORE** 

>>> PREVIOUSLY: Incoming, Issue 16 >>> COMING SOON: Hints & cheats

# SCHWARZENEGER TERMINATOR 3 RISE OF THE MACHINES





- ARNOLD SCHWARZENEGGER is back, bigger and better than ever in the long-awaited 3rd instalment of the Terminator phenomenon!
- The 2-disc set DVD includes over 6 hours of ground breaking special features.
- Includes both Dolby Digital 5.1 and DTS 5.1 audio tracks.
- This movie not only stands on its own but surpasses the films that have gone before it."

  Paul Le Petit, The Sunday Telegraph
- The perfect gift this Christmas!

BRING IT HOME. BRING IT ON.





↑ Expect an all-out war with all of the main characters from Return of the King.



↑ Take pot shots at the Dark Riders.



↑ Cave trolls are really tough customers.



↑ Sit back and watch the buildings fall.

# Could this be the One Game to rule them all?

# RETURN OF THE RINGS: RETURN OF THE KINGS: THE RINGS: TH

**WORDS: RALPH PANEBIANCO** 

GAME INFORMATION

DEVELOPER: HYPNOS ENTERTAINMENT

PUBLISHER: ELECTRONIC ARTS

RELEASE DATE: OCTOBER 31

PLAYERS: 1-2

WEBSITE: WWW.EA.COM



SLASH YOUR way through the forces of Mordor in the film of the final chapter of the Lord of the Rings.

EA'S LORD OF the Rings:
Return of the King starts
out big and loud. After
viewing the striking
footage of the Battle of
Helm's Deep, players are
thrust into the middle of
the battlefield to fight at
an intense pace that
does not let up until the
game's conclusion. With

characters ranging from Aragon and Gandalf to Merry and Pippin, players take their chosen warriors into battle scenes pulled straight from the movie, hacking and slashing their way through the hordes of enemies standing in the way. The scope is epic, the action is fierce, and most importantly, it plays like a dream.

The first EA romp into the LOTR licence, The Two Towers, was criticised for its terribly repetitive gameplay. Thankfully, most of these problems have been corrected. While the gameplay remains far from intellectual, it maintains enough variety to keep combatants entertained throughout the game's 14 missions.

Players earn experience and new combos as they belt through Uruk Hai and giant spiders, and the difficulty level increases very steadily as you progress. The environments are also quite interactive, such as ballista engines that destroy walls, burning spears that impale enemies and even cauldrons of molten lava that melt nasty goblins pounding on your door.

The defining aspect of *Return of the King*, however, is the stunning camera work that's are used to create a fantastic cinematic effect. Seldom is the camera squarely behind the character as it is in most other 3D beat-em-ups. Instead, it positions itself low on the ground to emphasis the size of the Cave Trolls gunning for a piece of your noggin, or far away to convey the huge scope of the battles. In other times, the camera is up close to create an intense feeling of claustrophobia in Shelob's lair. This is a kind of cinematic presentation that assails the senses with a violent sortie of magic and metal, placing gamers right in the thick of the movie.



★ Even Gandalf gets in for a bit o' biffo.



★ Yes, you really do pour lava on them!

# OTR: RETURN OF THE KING MREVIEWS





♠ Apply some strategy when fighting bigger opponents.

↑ Watch the bodies pile up as you cleave through one at a time!

### >> THE RIGHT TIMING Unlike last year's The Two Towers, Return of the King was released at the same time across all gaming platforms. That way, hopefully will feel marginalised or accuse EA of prejudice towards any particular console gaming format.

### >>> FIGHTING FIT Like The Two Towers, Return of the King has ranged attacks as well as an extra-powerful melee attack for cleaving through any stubborn shields being held up by the enemy.

# A VIOLENT SORTIE OF MAGIC AND METAL, PLACING GAMERS RIGHT IN THE THICK OF THE MOVIE"

Visuals are absolutely spectacular, but there's no time to stand around to admire the eye candy. Before you know it, your sound system will let off a booming explosion as the tower at Minas Tirith is hit by a catapult blast and crumbles to the ground. Yes that's right - on top of the epic visuals, Return of the King provides a stunning audio bombardment to accompany the action. Battles sound furious. with yells of mortal men and cave trolls coming from all sides with only the clash of steel to separate them. And unlike other licensed titles,

the voices in this game are the real-life actors from the movie. In fact, the game is littered with special interviews of the stars, taken while they were doing voice recording at EA HQ.

The cherry on the cake is the inclusion of a co-op mode, so now you and your friends can face the endless tides Mordor's troops together. It's like Golden Axe but set in Middle-Earth, and it goes a long way to increasing the longevity of the title. Not only is this feature a huge amount of fun but it also serves a very functional purpose in the single player mode. It's not

uncommon to get stuck on missions towards the end of the game, so its nice to know that your mates can just plug in a controller and help you get past the to tough spots. Remember it's not cheating - its teamwork.

Return of the King is a brilliant package, and is by far one of the best movie tie-ins ever released. Its incredible attention to visual detail, frantic pace, cinematic presentation and refined gameplay mechanics have combined to create a title that will win many a heart this Christmas.





"Aarrrgh! Who stole my chocolate cookies?!"



↑ Upgraded transportation for the Dark Riders.



↑ Sauron's eye is now fixed on Gondor.



# POWER

Visually breathtaking with intense audio to match the action. A smorgasbord for the senses.

# STYLE

Frantic but controlled, cinematic but not indulgent, epic but not wanky.

# **IMMERSION**

Solid combo system, perfect difficulty curve and rewarding character upgrades

# LIFESPAN

The hidden missions, extras and co-op mode will keep you coming back even after you've finished it.

# GOOD POINTS

#### + VISUALS AND SOUND + GREAT CINEMATICS

+ FURIOUS, ENDLESS, ENGAGING ACTION.

# BAD POINTS

- REPETITIVE AT TIMES. - OCCASIONAL CAMERA FUNNINESS.
- MORE FOOTAGE PLZ!

## SUMMARY

The perfect ending to the trilogy. Insane cinematic action, with everything that's made the films so successful.

OFFICIAL AUSTRALIAN XBOX MAGAZINE **SCORE** 

- >>> PREVIOUSLY: Exclusive Access Issue 18
- >>> COMING SOON: Hints & cheats







↑ Hit & Run is so similar to GTA, all it's really missing is the guns. But we wouldn't want to see that, would we?

# It's The Simpsons meets Grand Theft Auto

# SIMPSONS HIT A R

WORDS: JAMES LEDLEY

GAME INFORMATION

**DEVELOPER: RADICAL ENTERTAINMENT** 

PUBLISHER: VIVENDI UNIVERSAL

RELEASE DATE: OUT NOW

PLAYERS: 1

WEBSITE: www.hitandrungame.com



A FUN, addictive, laugh out loud, driving action game done in true Simpson's style.

IF IMITATION is the sincerest form of flattery, then Simpsons Hit & Run reads like a love letter to GTA 3 developer Rockstar. Authentic to the TV show and genuinely fun to play, Hit & Run's virtual rendition of Springfield has been

perfectly blended to suit the open-ended crime-driving format of GTA 3, packed full of trademark Simpsons humour and obscure episode references.

Taking place in a series of driving missions (races, fetch quests, destruction, etc) Hit & Run places you in the shoes of show-staples Homer, Bart, Lisa, Marge and even Apu. While you have to complete the story missions to proceed through the game's seven maps, you have the

freedom to joyride through the streets, engage in bonus challenges, hunt for secrets on foot, or wreak havoc on the town - it's all up to you. Be warned though, wonton destruction will raise your wanted meter, which in turn alerts the police and results in a high-speed chases through the streets. Getting busted will cost you 50 coins. Ironically, these coins are often collected by destroying public property.

The game captures the Simpsons universe in 3D with boldly drawn characters and familiar environments. The smooth framerate and functional camera are appreciated, as are the easy-to-learn controls. Despite the morally remiss title, Hit & Run is suitable for anyone old enough to appreciate the animated show.

Penned by writers from the TV series and voiced by the original actors, this high-quality production is a fan's nirvana. With over fifty speaking characters, a branching story line and one-liners at a laugh-a-minute rate. Hit & Run delivers an impressive dose of classic selfloathing, socially-aware Simpson's humour.

With over 50 missions, completing the story will take a concentrated 15 hours of effort - the many side quests adding substantially to that. The problem is that despite the humour, you'll find yourself doing similar time-based tasks over and over again. Nevertheless, Hit & Run is a must-buy for any Simpsons fan and highly recommended for anyone on the market for some GTA 3-flavoured fun.



↑ Just like band camp in American Pie.



↑ Apu's new truck is Xbox Green.



↑ Taking the Space Bridge to Cybertron.



♠ Go for a spin in the nuclear reactor!



## POLIER

>>> ROAD RAGE The previous Simpsons game, Road Rage, tried

to copy the formula used in the Crazy Taxi series. Unfortunately, it sucked pretty badly.

> Simple but effective characters and environments. This game isn't designed to push any limits.

# STYLE

Fantastic use of the Simpson's licence. It's so authentic that it's a fan's dream-come-true.

# **IMMERSION**

The game is very easy to pick up and play, but it also keeps you coming back for more.

# LIFESPAN

A challenging (albeit slightly repetitive) story mode with a massive amount of secrets to find

# GOOD POINTS

- + GREAT FUN TO CRUISE AROUND OR WREAK HAVOC.
- + CLASSIC SIMPSON'S HUMOUR AND IN-IOKES.

# BAD POINTS

MISSIONS CAN BECOME REPETITIVE.

## SUMMARY

A Simpsons game that the fans can really be proud of. Hit & Run is authentic, enjoyable,

OFFICIAL AUSTRALIAN XBOX MAGAZINE **SCORE** 



- >>> PREVIOUSLY: This is our first serious encounter with Hit & Run
- >>> COMING SOON: Hints and cheats

# WELCOME TO THE IEDIACADEMY

YOU WILL NOT LEAVE THESE HALLS AS YOU ENTERED THEM.

YOU WILL UNLEARN ALL THAT YOU HAVE LEARNED.

DEDICATE YOUR LIFE TO A HIGHER PURPOSE.

USE THE KNOWLEDGE YOU ATTAIN HERE WISELY.

THE FORCE IS A POWERFUL ALLY. AND A TERRIBLE FOE.

DO NOT BE SEDUCED BY THE DARK SIDE.

FOR YOU ARE THE FUTURE GUARDIANS OF THE GALAXY.

# JEDI KNIGHT: JEDI ACADEMY

You are a new student at Luke Skywalker's Jedi Academy. Continue an ancient tradition as you learn the powers and dangers of the Force. Customize your character. Construct your own lightsaber from handle to blade. And develop your fighting stance-from the classic single-blade to the rare and powerful staffsaber. Then hone your Jedi skills in single player missions or fight it out in multiplayer modes. May the Force be with you, young Jedi.







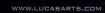




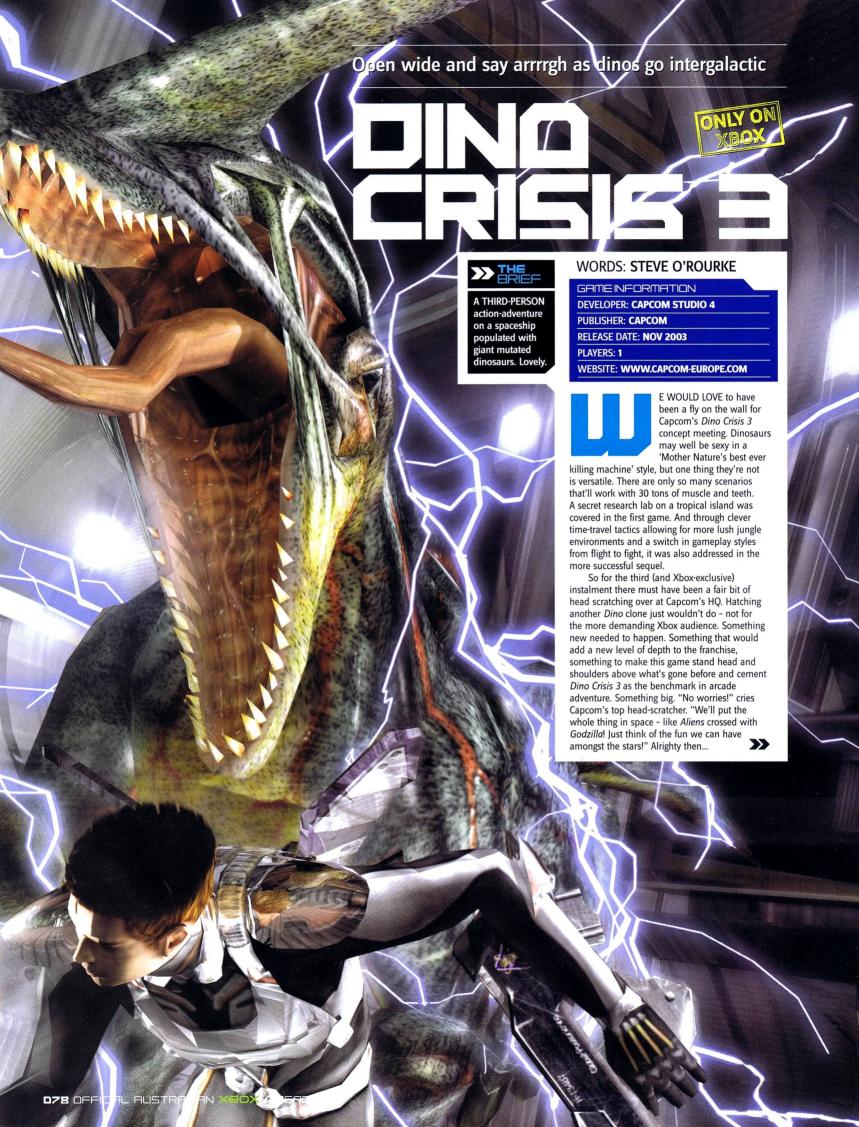


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# Get your thinking cap out of the wardrobe

PROBLEM SOLVING IN Dino Crisis 3 normally concentrates on figuring out how to get from A to B. You will however, occasionally get a puzzle to solve. Here's a common one.

### LOCKED DOOR BLUES

>> After a long journey you reach your destination to find a locked door with a strange message. Hold on! Doesn't WASP have something to do with your special weaponry?





### ROCKETS TO THE RESCUE

>>> After having no luck with our default Tempest missiles, we switched to the Juggernaut rockets and voilà! Just one blows the lock...

## ACCESS GRANTED

>>> A dozen rockets later and the door is nearly blown - it's a pretty costly way to solve the puzzle considering each rocket costs a wedge of credits. But it's the only way to proceed. so on you go!









With a gun like that, you don't need to be calling Rentokil.



↑ Dinosaur double-tag! Go on, scream. In space, no one will hear you...



Thank your lucky stars you've got a Tempest weapon to clear up the mess. Altogether now... he's behind you!

So with space travel in mind, the Dino Crisis saga fast-forwards to the distant future. The year is 2548 and after taking a 300-year wrong turn, a colony ship mysteriously re-emerges without any trace of its crew. Hardly surprising considering that centuries of decomposition would result in flesh and bone resembling little more than a sachet of salt. You play Patrick, a Marine heading up a salvage mission to investigate the mysterious goings-on aboard the Ozymandius. But just as your boarding party prepares to go and explore the abandoned ship, a selfdefence mechanism kicks into life and promptly destroys your vessel, colleagues and ticket home.

Through the handy use of a jetpack (an item that features strongly throughout the game), our hero manages to escape the stricken shuttle and navigate his way to the ship's hangar where the adventure proper begins. This entails a bloody big dinosaur chomping one of the few survivors in half before itself becoming prey to an army of slugs with teeth. Seeing is believing, and fortunately thanks to some of the very best cutscenes ever to grace a game, we believed again and again and again. The opening cinematics are everything



# WHEN CAMERAS GO BAD>>>

To beat the dinosaurs you need to beat the camera

YOU'LL DISCOVER FROM this review that we're not exactly fans of the *Dino Crisis 3* camera. With the lack of a roaming viewpoint and a static first-person view, the problem you'll encounter time and again is demonstrated below.

### **ALL QUIET**

>>> Sonia is happily admiring the view and minding her own business. We're not in the mood to stand still so we don't switch to static first-person. But - and this is a big 'but' - the camera should really be in a position where she's not looking directly into the screen because...





## DEATH BECOMES HER

>>> Out of nowhere comes a dinosaur whose speed makes pretty sure it'll get the first bite, if not the kill. It had probably been mooching around in front of our heroine for ages but because we rarely see from behind the character we can't tell what's in front. And that right there is the problem.

"DINO CRISIS 3'S OPENING CINEMATICS ARE BRUTAL, FRIGHTENING AND JAW-DROPPINGLY SPECTACULAR"

# IT'S A LOT MORE FUN PLAYING WITH A LADY>>>

Girls have more fun and look better in a catsuit

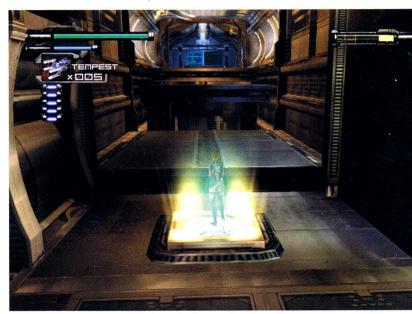
IN TYPICAL CAPCOM survival style you don't just get to play as manly Patrick, you also spend time playing as his fitter sidekick, Sonia. Apart from being easier on the eye (to our male readers - ed), our heroine also has slightly different weaponry, thanks to a multi-shot freeze gun that ricochets all over the place.



↑ David Blaine's been teaching Sonia a few nifty getaway techniques.



♠ Patrick fancied some new alligator skin shoes..



↑ That Sonia's a lovely girl - such a radiant personality.

they should be for this genre: brutal, frightening and jaw-droppingly spectacular. It's just a shame the game doesn't follow suit. Yes you've read it right, we're giving this review a critical dig in the ribs by paragraph four – all does not bode well.

The gameplay is almost entirely ship-based a humongous floating complex that, just to make life easier, can change its shape (and subsequent access points) through activating various consoles. So yup, you've guessed it - we're back in familiar survival horror gameplay mode and the songsheet goes like this. Discover you need to go to location A, but you can't get there because it lies behind a locked door that requires a security pass. The room that holds the security pass (location B) can't be accessed without changing the ship formation. Find the room with the console to change the formation (invariably miles from where you need to go). Make your way to location B to find security pass, before being locked in and faced with destroying a wave of respawning dinosaurs. Pick up keycard, go back to the start of the map to unlock the original door to get you to location A. Get treated to a cutscene to reward you for your efforts, before going through the whole process again. Only this time it takes even longer because as you unlock further sections of the ship, you'll continually need to backtrack to make progress. One step forward, two steps back - the gameplay in a nutshell and excuse us while we curl up in the corner because it's the same tired old formula that we've seen countless times before.

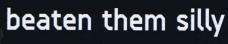


WEAPONS
The catalogue of
weaponry is smaller
than it could be. There
are various variations
you can add to your
standard weapon,
transforming it into a
shotgun and laser
pistol. There's also a
power-up shot where
you can store up a
supercharge by holding
down the fire button.



Zombies are nothing to be afraid of. Especially after you've beat

with their own arms.

















Welcome to Ghoulhaven Hall, the haunted home of the dastardly Baron von Ghoul. It's you and Cooper, battling anything the evil Baron puts in your way. Armed with chairs, pool cues and tables, you'll smash your way through over 50 rooms, crushing Skeletons, kicking Ninja Imps, bashing Vampire Chickens and hordes of other dirty fightin' ghoulies. All the while, trying to avoid being bitten, burnt and even mummified. So take a deep breath and get over your fears, you've got a house to wreck.





it's good to play together

xbox.com/ghoulies

# ZREVIEWS DIND CRISIS 3



↑ Someone ugly is about to get a faceful of lead...



↑ Great balls of fire! Your WASPs may bail you out on more than one occasion.



↑ Sneaky Sonia shoots a dino up the bum. Tyrannosorearse?



↑ The tasty-looking electrical pylon didn't sit too well with the T-Rex.

# THE BEASTIES BENEFIT FROM GREAT ANIMATION AND SURPRISINGLY GOOD AI"

If we sound cynical we make no apologies. We're at the point of padchucking frustration that what could have been a classic is overshadowed by design flaws that put the 'slop' in 'sloppy'. It's not the run-of-the-mill gameplay that's the biggest offender in this title - that's a forgivable by-product of the genre. What's got our blood boiling is the camera which does everything it can to ruin the experience. Dino Crisis 3 camerawork is on the Raspberry award shortlist for all-time worst camera in a 3D game. It's up there with Batman: Dark Tomorrow (Issue 17, 2.0). It's. That. Bad.

You continually find yourself shooting directly into the camera, meaning you're looking at your character rather than whatever he or she is shooting at. This is of absolutely no discernable use when trying to fight dinosaurs who can clobber you with a flick of their tails, or when you need to make an acrobatic leap onto a ledge you can hardly see. You do get a first-person viewpoint by clicking the Right thumbstick, but the developer in its infinite wisdom has made this view static so you can shoot but you can't move. Nice one, Capcom. Other camera cardinal sins include a fixedposition view where your character will change direction as he runs across the screen. Just what you need when you're having a hard enough time running around a ship that for the large part looks all too similar.

But if you can put the formulaic gameplay and disastrous camera to one side then perhaps,

just perhaps, there's a decent enough game to play. And if you dig deep enough, there is. The dinosaurs look good, albeit somewhat skinless no doubt pushing the point that these are not the garden variety Jurassic types. The beasties benefit from some great animation and some surprisingly good AI where they'll follow you up platforms and over boxes to keep you on your toes; and the tense soundtrack has been learnt from the *Silent Hill* School of Music - meaning a little can go a long way.

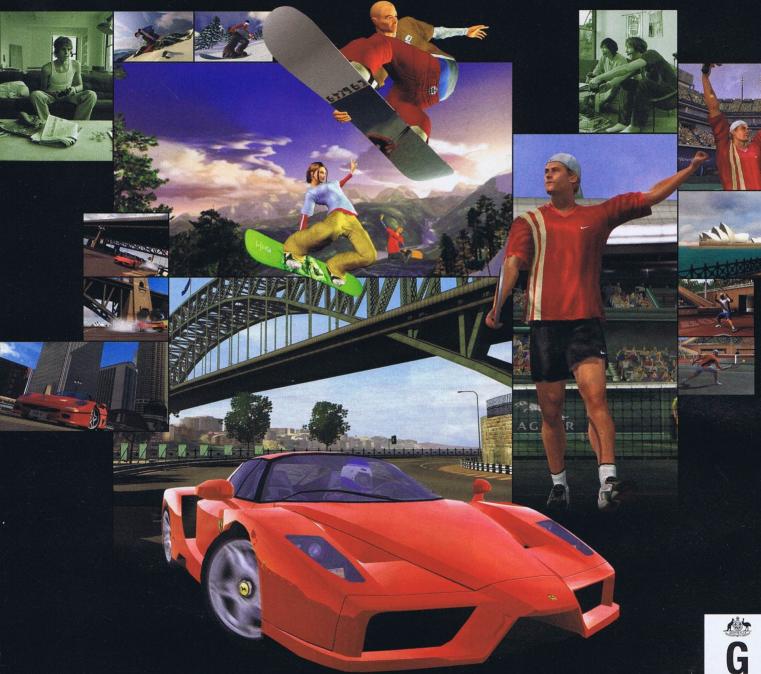
Character control is also pretty slick - especially with the added jetpack. You can now navigate the vertical as well as the traditional horizontal, so much more of the map is open for exploration. But combat is largely a hit and hope affair. Auto-aim is the name of the game, which is probably all for the best considering most of the time you can't see the enemy - even if they are two feet from your face. You can aim in first-person but, as we said earlier, you can't move, so we guess you won't be doing it very often.

As it stands, *Dino Crisis 3* just doesn't make the grade of premium arcade adventures. Goodlooking visuals and big-budget cutscenes are all well and good, but when combined with amateur camerawork and wrapped up inside repetitive gameplay, the overall review score starts to sink quicker than a T-Rex in a tar pit. There's a half-decent title in there somewhere, but it'll need to be excavated from its fossil by gamers that don't want to see this franchise face extinction.



>>> PREVIOUSLY: Incoming - Issue 17 >>> COMING SOON: Hints - Issue 23

# Become a local hero...at the expense of your mates.









Race your Enzo Ferrari around the streets of Sydney in Project Gotham Racing 2. Shred the slopes of Mount Buller in Amped 2. Wipe your opponents off the court like only Lleyton Hewitt can in Top Spin. With over 230 games now available on Xbox, these three provide a blend of mind blowing game play and exhilarating Australian flavour. Experience what it feels like to defeat your friends on home turf.











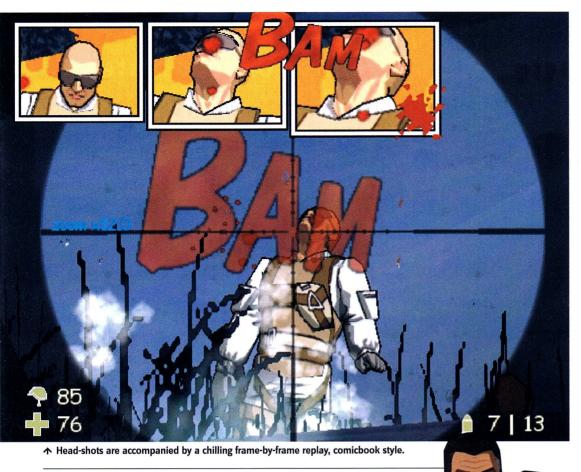




TOP SPIN



it's good to play together





↑ A nice little confirmation of the kill.



↑ "We're not worthy! We're not worthy!"



↑ Throw grenades into enemy choppers.

↑ "Do I look conspicuous in this?"

# Want a new taste of FPS action?



**WORDS: JAMES COTTEE** 

GAME INFORMATION

**DEVELOPER: SOUTHEND INTERACTIVE** 

PUBLISHER: UBI SOFT

RELEASE DATE: OUT NOW

PLAYERS: 1-4, 2-8 ON XBOX LIVE

WEBSITE: WWW.XIII-THEGAME.COM



USE GUNS and super spy skills to unravel a sinister conspiracy in this snazzy firstperson shooter. CEL SHADING was once regarded as a technology that could change the very face of gaming. Eschewing the pseudorealism of the CGI mainstream, it brought comic book imagery to life in vivid 3D.

Thankfully, this rendering technique is

finally being put to good use. A first person shooter, XIII is based on a series of graphic novels. While the character designs vary from understated to outlandish, they're all a very convincing part of a pulp noir comic come to life.

Developer Southend Interactive could have simply stopped at the rendering, but they took some extra steps to drag comic storytelling

techniques into the interactive age. One of the more striking ways was through the use of picture frames to highlight game events. When, say, a significant line of dialogue is being uttered, a picture-in-picture view will open up to highlight that event. Thus, important plot points are rammed home without the danger of being swept under a rug of visual clutter.

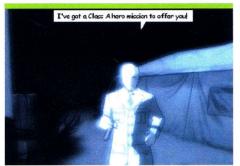
Event panels also reward your performance. Pull off a head-shot, and you'll be treated to a slow motion replay delivered in comic form. It's here that another of XIII's big draws reveals itself: not only will your victim scream, you'll see huge letters spelling "ARRRGH!!!" stream out of his mouth. It's in-game onomatopoeia, and it's possibly a world first.

While the look and feel have been borrowed from 60s comic books, the sound and plot derive more from the serious TV and cinema of the era. Quiet moments are accompanied by piano and subtle lounge

↑ These drugs are making me woozy.

# FORGET ME NOT>>> Flashbacks to help get over your amnesia

AGENT XIII HAS his memory jogged by the things around him. Flashbacks are completely interactive in this game, so don't just stand around admiring how gorgeous and dream-like everything looks!



★ General Carrington is the only man willing to help clear your name.



↑ Agent XIII was one of the XX - but what were the other conspirators planning?



♠ Agent XIII lies tucked in bed while having his first identity crisis.

SIXTH SENSE Agent XIII, has an uncanny ability to sense where enemies are. even when they're in the next room, Look for the distinctive "Tap Tap Tap" on the screen to reveal the footsteps. and thus the position of dim-witted guards.

# PULL OFF A HEAD-SHOT, AND YOU'LL BE TREATED A SLOW MOTION REPLAY DELIVERED IN COMIC FORM

music, while frantic action blasts the player with squealing jazz trumpets. By blasting though dozens of gunmen, you ultimately piece together the plot. To give some punch to the periodic flashbacks, the picture is leeched of all colour. These creepy black and white scenes blur reality and toy with your

Despite being minimalist in style, the visuals are quite functional. If something is visible in a level, there's a good chance you can interact with it: windows can be broken

expectations, which really sucks you in.

and ashtrays can be smashed over people's heads. Every animation carries some kind of action cinema cliche, whether it's the way you discard the remnants of a smashed chair, or the way you affectionately pat an AK-47 in an idle moment. Even unarmed combat is a blast - catch a guard unawares, and you can perform a karate chop right out of Get Smart.

A strong story usually means linearity, and most of XIII plays as straight as an arrow. Replay value will mainly stem from ramping up the difficulty. The multi-player options, however, are

diverse, though a tad unremarkable. System Link, Split-screen and Xbox Live are all supported, plus there are bots, putting it one up on Halo. Yet TimeSplitters 2 has far more Al options, and Ghost Recon and its ilk have more immersive online play.

It looks fantastic, and its gameplay is unique, but ultimately the biggest selling point for XIII is the story. If you're after a mature, sophisticated, innovative and surprising shooter experience, you can consider a game like XIII money well spent.





4-player split-screen produces just as many laughs as multiplayer on Xbox Live.



♠ Even the muzzle-flash is comical.



↑ Use human shields to frustrate the enemy.



# POWER

Unprecedented use of cel-shading and comic effects, ramped up with the full grunt of Xbox

## STYLE

Utterly unique. Jazz-age sounds, retro espionage with a sinister veneer, and stacks of firepower.

## **IMMERSION**

Edgy camera techniques, frequent flashbacks and compelling characters build the illusion.

# LIFESPAN

Substantial single player campaign supplemented by numerous multiplayer features.

# + SPECTACULAR VISUALS. + UNIQUE INTERFACE. + POWERFUL STORY.

# + VERY COOL. BAD POINTS

GOOD POINTS

LINEAR, ALMOST FLAT AT TIMES. PUNISHING DIFFICULTY.

# SUMMARY

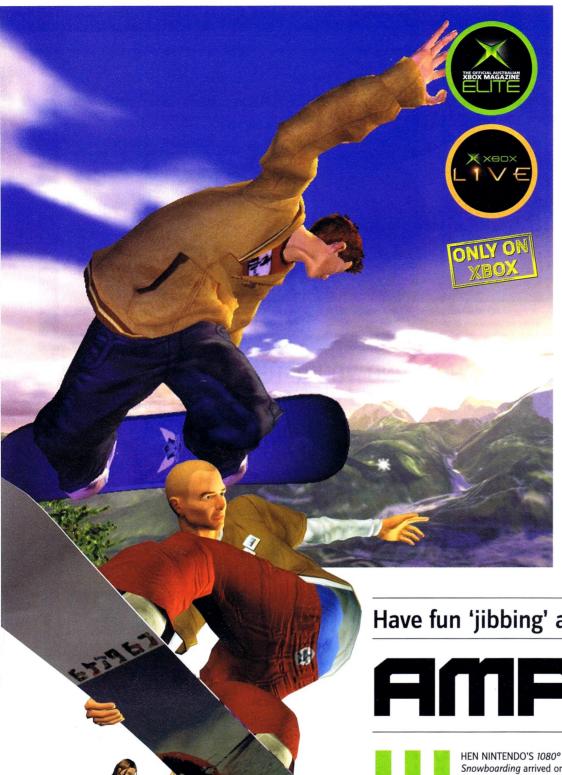
An above-average FPS with good looks and a killer story. It's daring and different, and a nice change from the norm.

OFFICIAL AUSTRALIAN XBOX MAGAZINE **SCORE** 



>>> PREVIOUSLY: Incoming, Issue 20

>>> COMING SOON: Tips - Issue 24

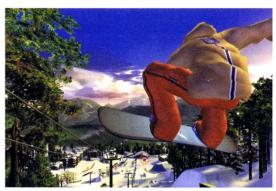




Strike a pose, there's nothin' to it...



↑ Replays are very cool to watch in Amped 2.



↑ The whole slope is yours to carve up.

Have fun 'jibbing' a few snowmen.

# AWPED 2

Snowboarding arrived on the N64, it asserted itself as the benchmark game in the genre. No other snowboarding title could boast the same realistic innovations as 1080°,

and it seemed, for a long time at least, no other series could fill the sizable shoes left in 1080°'s wake. Fast forward to the launch of the Xbox, and Microsoft themselves dished up a 'simulation' snowboarding experience that left 1080° for dead.

Amped offered the kind of depth usually found in PC games, only with the added arcade element that made 1080° such a hit in the first place. It was this balanced approach to gameplay that allowed Amped to steal the snowboarding crown away from Nintendo and their defunct N64 - Amped carried with it all of the realistic attributes needed to derail 1080° (and any other upstarts on the way), and added as much depth as casual and hardcore players could want. Not without its faults though,

Amped could be as frustrating as it was fun. Glitchy collision detection and questionable animations helped dint the game's armour, if just a little, which is why all eyes are are now trained on the game's successor; the unsurprisingly named, Amped 2.

So what can players expect from Amped 2? A deeper, richer gaming experience that builds on the strong aesthetics of the original and delivers as much balanced gameplay as you could want. At least that's in the humble opinion of OXM, but we do have a few [hundred] hours clocked into the game to back that statement up, which is why we're so 'amped' to bring you this review [You just HAD to let that one out, didn't you? - Ed].

Amped 2 is as familiar as you could ask for; the interface is exactly the same as the original, inviting players into a beaten path of recognisable structuring. There are new options and new additions to existing gameplay fundamentals, but it's the 'homely' setup that invokes the need to pick up and play, and it's in this department that Microsoft

**WORDS: STEPHEN FARRELLY** 



CARVE UP the powder with flips and grinds in Microsoft's second snow boarding game.

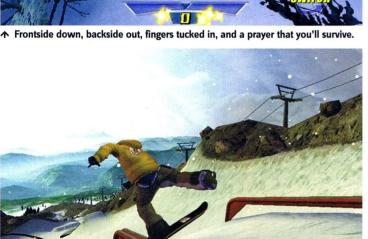
**GAME INFORMATION** 

**DEVELOPER: MICROSOFT** PUBLISHER: MICROSOFT

**RELEASE DATE: OUT NOW** 

PLAYERS: 1-4 (XBOX LIVE COMPATIBLE)

WEBSITE: WWW.XBOX.COM



↑ Not a great pose for the magazine covers... but good for the blooper reel.



↑ "Wow, these 'Amped' snowboards are really cool!"



↑ Multiplayer through split-screen and Xbox Live gives Amped 2 extra life.

# "YOU'LL BE FACED WITH ENDLESS TRICK AND COMBO SCENARIOS"

delivers in spades. You'll instantly feel comfortable with the controller in your hand. and once you hit the first mountain, Amped players will be riding in heaven. If you've never played the game before, it's a very simple setup; essentially you're given the face of a whole mountain to ride. Controls are mapped in a similar fashion to Tony Hawk - holding down A is an indispensable part of playing as this is your ollie button, and you should always be poised for a jump. It also acts as an 'accelerate' button, which is obviously an important aspect of moving within the game. Grinding objects and rails is as simple as a touch of the B button; Y is used for lip tricks and the L and R triggers can be used to tweak grabs or, if used in conjunction with the left analogue stick, to perform more complex tweaks. And that's it. See? Simple.

The innovations and improvements over the original aren't all that obvious barring the addition of new mountains and Snowskating (more on that in a minute). Beyond that, players can expect a slicker graphics engine, one that runs a lot smoother than *Amped*, and draws mountains at a more consistent pace. There is still noticeable popup, but it's nowhere near the level of the previous game. Character animations are a lot more in tune with the trick system this time around, so it never seems like you're performing one move on top of another. Instead, it all apimates together seamlessly – a very welcome improvement. Sound effects and NPC retorts are all new, and they've been modelled

around the real thing, so the suspension of disbelief is extended on a grander level. And finally, the points system has been rewritten to reflect the style in which you ride. You can no longer score overgenerous figures for huge airs or simple tricks, you really have to work to get that high score, and when you do, it feels much more rewarding.

As mentioned earlier, there are new mountains to ride, including Australia's own Mt. Bulla, but there's also a new option to Snowskate. Snowskating is a new movement in snowboarding that more closely ties the sport to skateboarding. Using a specially designed deck, riders can perform skateboarding flip tricks through the freedom of not being bound to a snowboard. This broadens the combo possibilities ten-fold, liberating the snowboarding genre of many of its traditional confines. No longer are you forced to work within the sport's boundaries – instead, you'll be faced with endless trick and combo scenarios, rewarding players with lateral line opportunities and an 'outside-the-square' approach to player interaction.

Xbox Live, is another reason to love *Amped 2*. Just being able to race against random opponents is only half the fun: the other half comes from dazzling any onlookers with your abilities.

Amped 2 is fun, addictive, deep, vast and most importantly, rewarding. It's a game that sits head and shoulders above anything else in its class and sets the benchmark for others to follow. An excellent addition to the series.



# POWER

Vast courses push the engine a little with occasional framerate drops and pop-up problems.

## STYLE

A funny and cool representation of snowboarding and the lifestyle that comes with it.

## **IMMERSION**

Some glitchy collision detection can make things a little frustrating for hardcore players.

# LIFESPAN

Xbox Live compatibility will keep you hooked for as long as you like looking at snow.

# VAST MOUNTAIN-SIDES HUGE SOUNDTRACK.

\* GREAT ON XBOX LIVE. \* ADDICTIVE GAMEPLAY INNOVATIONS. \* TONY HAWK ON SNOW!

GOOD POINTS

# BAD POINTS

 COLLISION DETECTION.
 POP-UP.
 FRUSTRATING PRO CHALLENGES.

# SUMMARY

Perfect or armchair athletes and snowboarders alike, it's pick-up-and-play with depth, and it's amazingly good fun.

OFFICIAL AUSTRALIAN XBOX MAGAZINE **SCORE** 



- >>> PREVIOUSLY: This is our first look at Amped 2 since E3.
- >>> COMING SOON: Tips & tricks



# TRIMSON SKIES **ZREVIEW**





Watch out for the debris!



↑ Showboat your way through big explosions!



↑ Show off your flying skills by ducking and weaving out of the treacherous canyons.



↑ Dogfights in the city are awesome fun!



↑ Don't forget to pull up to avoid a collision!



♠ Enemies on fire: that's good news.

# EPIC DOGFIGHTS WITH DOZENS OF

forth are prime targets for air piracy, and thus a niche has opened up for mercenaries to protect airborne innocents.

That's where Nathan Zachary comes in. The leader of a free wheeling band of guns-for-hire, this suave barnstormer and his stunt fighter are always available to the highest bidder. He's part Han Solo, part Indiana Jones, and you get to control him as he fights against seemingly impossible odds. The bulk of the game is spent in the cockpit of a highly manoeuverable fighter plane, kitted out with rockets and unlimited machine gun ammo.

A novel control system helps player pull off special moves. In addition to the standard boosting and braking, you can click in the right thumbstick to aid in evasive action. Again, air combat is straightforward, but deceptively simple. You'll have to lead shots if you want to hit moving targets.

Incidental graphic effects help highlight your actions - motion blurring accompanies the turbo boost, and a flaming engine means your plane is about to buy the farm. Shell casings spew from your guns in a randomised pattern, occasionally looming large for some contrived serendipity.

Damage is handled in a forgiving fashion it's possible to survive a direct hit with a cliff face. The stress of taking off and landing has also been eliminated; all you have to do is get close to the desired destination and hit X to land. This makes accepting non-linear missions and visiting the repair shop a snap. It helps give you a sense of power and purpose in a larger world - it wouldn't be a stretch to call this Grand Theft Auto with planes.

You might also get the odd flashback to Star Wars. Epic dogfights with dozens of aircraft are the norm, often with huge zeppelins streaming flak back and forth. There's also plenty of fun to be had knocking American pop culture; one of the antagonistic super-powers is the Nation of Hollywood. As for foreign types, the Ragin' Cajuns of French Louisiana offer outrageous accents that just beg for a lethal response.

While anyone can pick up and play Crimson Skies, there's plenty of detail to amuse the history buffs. For instance, Nathan will quip off a one-liner every time he downs an enemy fighter - sometimes he'll say "Oh, The Humanity!" an obvious reference to the Hindenburg disaster.

The most obvious choice for comparison would be Yager. Both feature third-person dogfighting action in a retro-futuristic setting, a sarcastic leading man, comical friends and foes, and the odd bit of innuendo to keep the ball rolling. But lay them side by side, and stark differences become apparent. Yager had a lush engine, but limited altitude allotted for aerial manourvers. Crimson Skies has plenty of room for loop-the-loops and other niceties, with graphical power invested in vaster environments and more enemies to shoot.

Crimson Skies is big, brash, and doesn't take itself too seriously. Levels are diverse, dynamic, and riddled with secrets. It's suitable for brief to medium length bouts of action, either alone or over Xbox Live. It's simple, but it's slick - it's easy to imagine it becoming a staple of online play on the Xbox.



# POWER

Enormous environments, dozens of enemies, huge explosions - a graphical feast for the eyes

# STYLE

Fairly consistent high adventure setting, with wacky planes and massive dirigible motherships.

# **IMMERSION**

Inherently unreal setting made more convincing by lengthy missions and glossy graphics.

# LIFESPAN

Solid action that begs revisiting. Plenty to find and unlock, with Live support if you're so inclined.

# GOOD POINTS

- FANTASTIC SETTING.
- EPIC ACTION.
   SILLY PLOT.
- \* FUNNY DIALOGUE.

# BAD POINTS

- **ENEMY PLANES ARE** OFTEN DIFFICULT TO SPOT
- NOT A "REAL" FLIGHT SIMULATION.

A light-hearted, high-flying action game. It's not rocket science, but good for a dogfighting fix.



- >>> PREVIOUSLY: This is our first serious look at Crimson Skies
- >>> COMING SOON: Hints & tips





↑ Like the other Medal of Honor games, Rising Sun puts players through a series of scripted events to convey the war in cinematic form.

Medal of Honor sets its sights on the Pacific campaign.

# MEDAL OF HONOR: RISING SUN

WORDS: RALPH PANEBIANCO

GAME INFORMATION

DEVELOPER: EA LA

PUBLISHER: EA

RELEASE DATE: OUT NOW

PLAYERS: 1-4

WEBSITE: WWW.EA.COM



SHOOT YOUR way through the perilous Pacific campaigns of World War II in this first-person shooter.

DECEMBER 7, 1941.
This is the infamous day that saw the attack on Pearl Harbor, and it marks the starting point of your new *Medal of Honor* adventure. And my, does it begin with a bang. In a very *Halo*esque opening, your character is asleep in his bunk

when the first bomb drops and the frantic scramble to get topside sees you traversing through the many levels of your frigate, avoiding

fires and power cables, until you eventually reach the deck. Once there, the cinematics take over, and the fury of the Pearl Harbor attack is rendered with chilling ferocity. It's all very intense, very Bruckheimer and of course very Medal of Honor. However, after this benchmark-setting first stage, things start to go a little pear-shaped. From the outset, it is clear that very little has changed since Medal of Honor's last outing. Beneath the glossy exterior of the new locations, weapons, missions and player models lies an all-too familiar gameplay experience, and ultimately one that fails to capture the audience as much as its predecessors had in the past.

Now in its fourth console instalment, the *Medal of Honor* series has enjoyed critical acclaim for it's top-notch visuals, exceptional action and innovation in the shooting genre. Set in first person perspective, you take your soldier through various historically based missions, doing your part to bring down the Axis war machine with every artillery placement you destroy and intelligence document you 'borrow'. What's different about this game is that your enemies are not the Nazis on the Western front, but rather the Japanese in the Pacific.



↑ Let me refer you to my gardener.



↑ "That's not a knife..."



↑ Dude! Where's your helmet?



The Medal of Honor series is very big business for Electronic Arts, which attributes the video games market's fascination with the series to its clear-cut lines of good versus evil. On consoles, there has been Medal of Honor, Medal of Honor Underground and Medal of Honor: Frontline. And of course on PC, there's Medal of Honor: Allied Assault and numerous expansion packs.

# WERPONS OF THE TRADE

BEING ARMED with the right weapon in Medal of Honor: Rising Sun can mean the difference between life and death.



This sniper rifle is crucial for chalking up one-hit kills from long distance.



↑ THOMPSON

Standard machine gun, good for close to medium ranged combat.



A high-powered but inaccurate machine gun for mowing absolutely everything down.

Unfortunately, this is really where EA's creative juices stopped flowing. From here, it's as though the game designers have gone on auto-pilot for the remaining missions, churning out the same gameplay formulas that we've seen before. Missions consist of dull bush bashing for the first half of the game and confusing city navigation for the second half, which isn't particularly inspiring. Enemies are no smarter than they were in Frontline, and they still have an uncanny resistance to bullets. Six rounds with a sniper rifle to take down a bad guy? I don't think so. They're not too bright, either.

This might explain why the game lacks the tension and excitement that made its predecessors memorable. Levels feel large, spaced out and empty. The frantic action that defined Medal of Honor:

MIX OF GUNFIRE AND EXPLOSIONS"

↑ This looks like a job for John Rambo!



↑ Only one inept guard? Not a problem.



↑ The attack on Pearl Harbor is rendered in striking, visceral form. It's a pity the rest of the game doesn't follow suit.

Allied Assault on PC is nowhere to be seen, and this game suffers greatly as a result. This is a sad turn of events for the franchise, as it's clear that it hasn't kept up with the latest design innovations in the World War II genre, which are very apparent in upcoming games like Call of Duty.

This stagnancy is also visible in the game's uninspired graphics. Rising Sun looks almost identical to Frontline, which was already disappointing for Xbox fans to begin with. The only redeeming feature is the sound, which the MOH series is famous for using to brilliant effect. With a THX certification - Lucasfilm's 'this sound rocks' stamp of approval - Rising Sun provides a visceral and gloriously realistic mix of gunfire and explosions that will give even the most pricy of sound setups a workout

Rising Sun also features a simple but effective co-op mode. As with most games, many of the problems of the single player mode are less obvious when you have a brother-in-arms sitting next to you on the couch. It makes the game just that little bit more bearable, and may pull it over the line for fans looking for a decent multi-player game this Christmas.

Despite the obvious lack of evolution from its predecessor, Rising Sun is by no means a bad game. It's scripted, it's loud, there's loads to shoot at and it all follows through consistently. However, its failure to change with the times will be a disappointment to fans expecting an improvement.



## POWER

No real feeling of suspense or action. An empty shell compared to its predecessors.

## STYLE

Gritty but recycled visuals. THX sound makes up for it though.

# **IMMERSION**

Boring, un-engaging missions that we have all done before.

## LIFESPAN

Co-op mode provides the only real incentive to finish it. A week on the single player at most

### + BRILLIANT OPENING MISSION. + THX SOUND. + CO-OP MODE

# BAD POINTS

GOOD POINTS

- **DULL, REPETITIVE** MISSIONS. VISUALS AREN'T UP
- TO SCRATCH. NO TENSION.

## SUMMARY

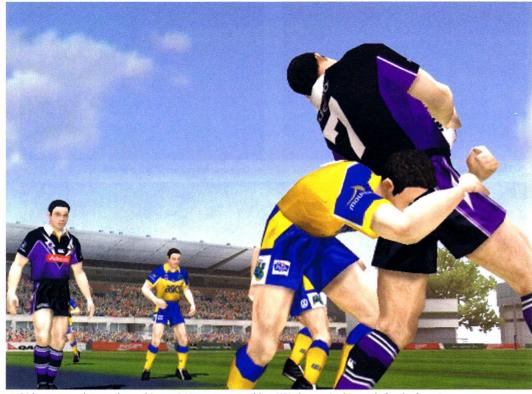
A disappointing outing for a popular franchise. Satisfying on its own, but the lack of

- >>> PREVIOUSLY: This is the first we've seen of Rising Sun.
- >>> COMING SOON: Hints & cheats



A VISCERAL AND GLORIOUSLY REALISTIC

MEDAL OF HONOR GAME, UNDERGOUND, SAW YOU CONTROLLING A FEMALE MEMBER OF THE FRENCH RESISTANCE NAMED MANON.



↑ Did your team let you down this year? Live out your wildest NRL dreams in this made-for-the-fans sim.

# The wait is finally over for a Rugby League game...

# RUGBY LEAGUE

# WORDS: RALPH PANEBIANCO

**DEVELOPER: SIDHE INTERACTIVE** 

**PUBLISHER: TRU BLU GAMES** 

RELEASE DATE: NOVEMBER

PLAYERS: 1-4

WERSITE

**WWW.TRUBLUENTERTAINMENT.COM** 



One of Australia's fave sporting past-times. Right the wrongs of the 2003 season in this sim.

ADMITTEDLY, Rugby League can't hope to deliver the same experience that an EA Sports game can. The developers of this title didn't have the time or money to put together something as flashy or as instantly gratifying as what most sports fans may have

liked. Nevertheless, Sidhe Interactive has done a fantastic job in capturing the essence of the sport. Everything that a footy fan would love is right here, and while it may not look fantastic, it still comes through as a great Rugby League title that you and your mates will take to on a weekend no matter how many beers you've had.

All the classic play modes that you'd expect are there. At first, only the standard NRL season is available, but later you can unlock the State of Origin Series, the City v Country series, International Test matches, English Super League and even a World Club challenge. There are also plenty of options available for tinkering with your favorite teams. Besides the ability to edit the

official 35 teams from competitions mentioned above, you can also create your own custom teams. Sidhe has created a huge number of generic logos and jerseys just waiting to be adopted as your team's colors. Ever wanted to see the Punchbowl Punishers take down the Roosters in a Grand Final? Well, that dream can now be realised.

Since sports games are only as good as their control schemes, it's encouraging to see that Sidhe got it right. Sidhe has created a simple and effective control system that gamers will be able to take to in minutes. It isn't terribly deep, but it is functional, and perfect for casual nights with a few mates who have never played before.

Sadly, the aesthetic values of the game aren't anywhere near a match for the controls. The graphics are very, very basic, with blockylooking, faceless, flat textured characters populating the field. The audio is also a bit disappointing, with the grunting and tackling effects sounding weak and repetitive. Certainly, for many fans, the most disappointing aspect of the sound will be the absence of in-game commentary from Ray Warren - those duties are taken up by Andrew Vos. While Vos makes a commendable effort, you can't help but miss the familiar voice of the Rabbit.

In the grand scheme of things, however, it's not as though Sidhe Interactive was out to create a pillar of technical excellence; it was out to create a fun, easy to play footy title to satisfy loyal League fans. In that respect, Sidhe has come through nicely. The simplicity of the control and the attention to detail has resulted in an experience that all but the most critical of gamers will enjoy. So invite some mates over, kick back, and enjoy- because the answer to the NRL off-season is here.



↑ Players look reasonable up close.



Roosters sleeping on the job.



Yes. He's running forward. We know.



↑ There's Super League action, too!



# POWER

>>> FOOTY FUNNIES Andrew Vos recorded

an incredible 5.000 lines for the in-game commentary, including "these pretzels are making me thirsty!"

> Lacks the flashy presentation of other sports games. Ray Warren is sorely missed.

# STYLE

Very poor quality visuals and sound upset an otherwise satisfying experience.

# **IMMERSION**

Tight but shallow controls that doesn't allow you to get into a more hardcore rhythm of play.

# LIFESPAN

Loads of competitions, massive amounts of customisation options and, of course, multiplayer mode,

# GOOD POINTS

**EXCELLENT CONTROL** PLENTY OF TEAM CUSTOMISATION **OPTIONS** 

# BAD POINTS

- VISUALS AND SOUND NO RAY WARREN NO BIFFS (NRL SAID
- NO, APPARENTLY)

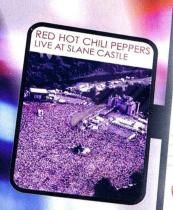
# SUMMARY

Despite the shortcor Rugby League is a satisfyi title that fans will come back to for many months to come.

OFFICIAL AUSTRALIAN XBOX MAGAZINE **SCORE** 



- >>> PREVIOUSLY: Developer Diary, Issue 19
- >>> COMING SOON: Hints & cheats



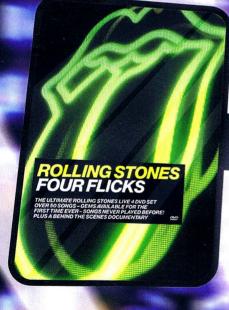
'LIVE AT SLANE CASTLE' INSTORE DECEMBER 01

- LIVE CONCERT / 18 TRACKS PERFORMED IN IRELAND ON 23 AUGUST 2003
- 30 MINUTE BACK-SCREEN PROJECTIONS
- CD ALSO AVAILABLE

THE BEST OF REM

THE BEST OF R.E.M 1988-2003 WON TUO

- FEATURES VIDEOS RARE INTERVIEWS & CONCERT FOOTAGE
- CD ALSO AVAILABLE



# OLLING STONES OUR FLICKS'

INSTORE DECEMBER 01

**◆**4 DISC SET

(4 X DVD BOX SET)

- OVER 5 HOURS OF MUSIC AND MORE THAN 50 SONGS
- FEATURES SONGS NEVER BEFORE RELEASED



↑ "Hiiie-yah!" Nice kick, Buffy, but it's a shame you can't kill vampires this way...



♠ Buffy gets stuck with the graveyard shift.



↑ You've gotta have Faith.

Miss Summers is back, and she's brought the whole gang to clean up Sunnydale

# BUFFY THE VAMPIRE SLAYER: CHAOS BLEEDS

# WORDS: STEPHEN DAULTREY

**GAME INFORMATION** 

DEVELOPER: EUROCOM

PUBLISHER: VIVENDI UNIVERSAL

RELEASE DATE: OUT NOW

PLAYERS: 1-4

WEBSITE: WWW.BUFFYGAME.COM



THIRD-PERSON survival horrorcum-beat 'em up based on the popular vampireridden TV show.

VLAD THE IMPALER can't be praised for too many things. Before the days of Xbox, the 15th-century Romanian prince amused himself by nailing hats to heads and skewering folk on spikes. It was such widespread viciousness that not only earned himself a place amongst

evil's elite, but also changed the face of modern horror forever. If it weren't for his insatiable bloodlust and Bram Stoker's vivid imagination, the gothic chills of the vampire world would probably never have been crafted and Sarah Michelle Gellar might have ended up washing plates in a café somewhere in New York. For that Vlad, we salute you. In a twisted way, of course...

Chaos Bleeds follows Buffy the Vampire Slayer (Issue 04, 8.9) as the second spin-off to creep from the shadows of the cult supernatural TV show. Similar to its predecessor, Chaos's formula is what happens when Silent Hill 2

collides with *Dark Angel* and *DOA 3* - a spooky, atmospheric beat 'em up with a funny bone lurking beneath the teen drama exterior. Overseen by its writers and partly intended as a 'lost' episode to series five, this is a rip-roaring adventure yarn boosted by a cast sexier than the original *Charlie's Angels*.

This time you star not only as Buffy, but as her entire Scooby gang. Willow, Xander, Spike, Faith and Sid (the ventriloquist's dummy from series one) are all part of the plot to outwit an ancient demonic force and save civilisation from the brink of darkness once again. This calls for puzzles, exploration, a bit of Lara-leaping and a whole load of martial arts action against a range of vampires, bats, mummies, and skeletons.

The graphical style is blend of survival horror and chunky cartoon glamour. The character models are large, shapely and capable of dazzling attacks. Buffy, for example, spin-kicks through the air with the devastating panache of a ballet dancer turned kung fu mentalist. The other heroes aren't bereft of a tasty chop or two either. Xander sweep-kicks zombies with effortless guile, while Willow - the most fun to play of the lot - hastily maintains a comfortable distance to unleash fireballs and homing missiles. How this originates from the same publishing stable as the atrocious Dark Angel (Issue 14, 4.8) and Bruce Lee (Issue 08, 1.0) is a mystery only Vivendi can answer. The fighting combos are many, and while you can get by without knowing what the hell you're pressing, it's considerably more engaging and playable than the previous Buffy title. That said, it does sway a bit too close to the 'too easy' side...



♠ Flashy moves. How about a dance mat sequel?



♠ An annoyed Buffy tells the ghouls to 'fork off'.

# BUFFY: CHAOS BLEEDS WREVIEWS

>> RUN, RABBIT RUN multiplayer games for up to four players to battle it out in. Slaver Challenge, Domination Versus and Last Man Standing are all basic fighting challenges, while Bunny Catcher is a race to see who can Progressing in the game unlocks new playable characters such as vampires, demons and

#### >> HEART ATTACKS

Although there are a number of items that can be used as weapons, vampires can only be killed with a stake to the heart, a hell-fire bomb or holy be carried at any one time and you'll also be able to pick up pool cues, spikes, baseball bats, crossbows and holy water supersoakers!

# GET SHORTY Wood ya believe it, you get to play as Sid the dummy!



♠ As Buffy's hips can't fit through tunnels, Sid goes it alone.



♠ And he's a mean fighter too, decking the big guys...



... before using the gas cylinders to blow a door open...



↑ ...and BANG! Now Buffy can join him with ease.

# "IT'S CONSIDERABLY MORE EXCITING, PLAYABLE AND ENGAGING THAN THE LAST BUFFY



♠ Gellar's likeness is damn impressive.

Unfortunately, a viciously awkward camera maligns what otherwise should be near-faultless fighting thrills. Although manual control is operated via the Right directional stick, positioning it exactly where you want, for the most part, is harrowing. No smooth, sweeping pans from the Spielbergian academy of cinematography here. Instead, it's a digital nightmare recognisable by its claustrophobic camera incapable of swinging in a full 360° arc. Viewing freedom is restricted both on the horizontal and vertical axis and, equally troublesome, that most uncompromising of thirdperson perspectives is seemingly preferred as the default option. The result is that you've little chance of spotting approaching vampires, and you have to rely on the surround effects.

One of the problems of the original Buffy video game stemmed from the hazardous manner in which weapons were swapped during combat. Chaos Bleeds makes a valiant effort to redeem this with a 'quick staking' button, which means stunning a bloodsucker with a garden



↑ The church is open to anyone these days...

shovel before puncturing his/her heart can be achieved swiftly. The negative aspect of this, of course, is that you're then stuck with the stake, resulting in a messy case of wading through your inventory to revert back to your original weapon of choice. Apply this method to the medikit and the problem is magnified - you'll normally find yourself slaughtered by a Halloween gathering of gothic ghouls by the time you've fumbled upon your health boost in the middle of a ruck.

Aside from its overly sympathetic difficulty setting, wayward camera and occasional glitches in design, Buffy the Vampire Slayer: Chaos Bleeds strikes at the very heart of gaming's most important ingredient - it's fun to play. Whether you subscribe to Gellar's school of high-kicking hi-jinx or not, this remains a sassy, atmospheric chiller that anyone can enjoy. With the bonus of several multiplayer games for up to four players (Bunny Catcher being the best), the package is quite possibly a vampire-lover's wettest nightmare. Who said the beat 'em up was too long in the tooth?

# THE VERDICT

## POWER

Large, well-animated character models and decent settings, but lacking polish here and there.

Like a haunting teen horror story with a sweet blend of scares, giggles and action.

# **IMMERSION**

Great fighting action and cunning 'soap drama' narrative structure will draw you in immediately.

# LIFESPAN

It will hook you to the end, but it's pretty easy, so you won't want to play it again. Multiplayer is good.

# GOOD POINTS

\* BRILLIANT ACTION. PLAY AS SIX OF THE SHOW'S STARS. GOOD STORYLINE.

## BAD POINTS

BAD MANUAL CAMERA. A BIT TOO EASY. **FRUSTRATING** INVENTORY.

Enjoyable, extremely playable and spookily atmospheric. Even non-Buffy fans should get a kick out of this.

OFFICIAL AUSTRALIAN XBOX MAGAZINE **SCORE** 



>>> PREVIOUSLY: Preview - Issue 20

>>> COMING SOON: Hints - Issue 23





↑ The Thugsville level allows you to foil bank robberies while you race - shoot the villains to earn bonus goodies.

Is it worth getting your freak on with this airborne racer?

# FREAKY FLYERS



↑ Where's Aladdin when you need him?



↑ This funky dread is after the top spot.



Rear-gunner action is the norm here.



↑ Don't fly over it - fly through it!

# WORDS: STEVE O'ROURKE

GAME INFORMATION

DEVELOPER: MIDWAY

PUBLISHER: MIDWAY

RELEASE DATE: OUT NOW

PLAYERS: 1-2

WEBSITE: WWW.FREAKYFLYERS.COM



PICK A character and soar across a wide range of explorative maps in this kart-style arcade racer.

REMEMBER WHEN you were little and you'd mix up loads of ingredients in your mum's kitchen just to see what the result tasted like? Normally you'd be left with a stomach that was flipping more times than a trampolining acrobat but occasionally you'd create

something that was palatable, at least to the point where you wouldn't throw it back up again. Developers sometimes use the same approach when designing new games – admittedly without the blue tongue side effect of kitchen mishaps.

Which brings us to Freaky Flyers, a karting game by any other name, except the karts have wings, propellers and, well, they're planes. [Which could make airsickness more of an issue than food poisoning - Ed.]

You can take to the skies with more than a dozen characters (most of which need to be unlocked) in this comic third-person airplane racer. Ever played a karting game? Then Freaky will be a test of memory not dexterity. A simple control system allowing you to shoot both

forwards and backwards combined with a trigger-based acceleration system is all you need to know. No innovation there, but the game does start to carve a niche for itself with the lush rolling terrain you have to navigate through.

The landscapes offer a wealth of variety, and because you're flying and not stuck to any rigidly enforced track you can pretty much decide your own path through the course. From the mountains of Canada, to the downtown urban sprawl of Chicago. You even get the chance to pay an ode to the '80s movie *Innerspace* and race through the arteries of a human body while trying to avoid white blood cells. If variety is the spice of life, then this title is one tasty dish.

There are also half a dozen sub-goals to try and complete during each race – from rescuing a Yeti to foiling a bank job – all of which result in shooting stuff as you fly past. As the game progresses it becomes more important to achieve these objectives. Successful completion opens up turbo portals as well as giving you extra slots for bonus pick-ups you find along the way (told you it was just like a kart game). Ultimately, though, this is where the chief complaint comes in. The requirement to complete quests as the races get tougher often means you're focusing on shooting targets and not gaining on your competitors, which won't help you progress through the levels.

Fancy a break from the norm? You can do much worse. The humour (each character is very much a personality, with their own polished cutscenes), two-player dogfight option, inventive maps, mini-games, and novelty of having an aerial kart game can't be ignored. Playing for days on end isn't likely but a quick blast of airborne enjoyment is on the menu with this freaky little game.

# X THE VERDICT

# POWER

Nothing remarkable under the hood but thankfully no slowdown whilst navigating dense maps.

# STYLE

Highly polished character cutscenes and inventive maps give the game a unique personality.

# IMMERSION

Loads of sub-quests, characters and maps to unlock but it's not exactly brain surgery.

# LIFESPAN

Having to finish second to progress but getting pipped at the post will keep you busy for a while.

# GOOD POINTS

\* EASY TO PICK UP AND PLAY; HARD TO PUT DOWN AND STOP. \* VARIETY OF MAPS \* SHOOTING YOUR

OPPONENTS DOESN'T GET DULL.

# BAD POINTS

- TOO MANY SUB-GOALS
DETRACT FROM RACING

## SUMMARY

A wacky racer that delivers both fun and firepower. Won't leave you grounded in the entertainment stakes.

OFFICIAL AUSTRALIAN XBOX MAGAZINE **SCORE** 



- >>> PREVIOUSLY: Incoming Issue 20
- >>> COMING SOON: Hints Issue 23



# **MREVIEWS**



↑ Other Judges will help you to some extent, but not all can be encouraged to follow you through levels.



↑ Dark Judge Mortis. Handsome chap.



↑ Dark Judge Fear. Slightly comical.



↑ Judge Death employs a skeleton staff.

# A Dredd-full state, or sex in the Mega-City?

# JUDGE DREDD: DREDD VERSUS DEATH

WORDS: JAMES COTTEE

GAME INFORMATION

DEVELOPER: REBELLION

PUBLISHER: VIVENDI

RELEASE DATE: OUT NOW

PLAYERS: 1-4

WEBSITE: WWW.DREDDVERSUSDEATH.COM



RID MEGA-City One of Judge Death's zombie minions in this futuristic shooter. You are the Law. THE DARK JUDGES are back. The stars of countless heavy metal T-shirts, Fire, Fear, Mortis and Death have escaped their maximum-security prison to wreak bloody murder on Mega-City One. Yet the millions of future New York are not helpless – standing ready

to battle these fiends is the greatest lawman who ever lived: Judge Dredd.

Those unfamiliar with the comic may be unsure about this game. After all, it's an average-looking first person shooter with no Live support, and it's certainly not *Halo 2*. First impressions reveal samey looking levels, as though sketched in by a hung-over Luc Besson. A vague *Fifth-Element* motif, backed by generic techno and overblown character designs. Plus, the memory of the dire Stallone movie still looms large.

But look closer, and the pleasant surprises start to trickle through. Developers Rebellion didn't merely licence the characters, they bought them. Rather than pour all their efforts into an engine that would ultimately be compared to Bungie's brilliance, they concentrated on making their baby as authentic as possible. Every sign, every nuance, every last detail is 100% *Dredd*.

The first thing that strikes you is the voices. Dredd himself has the deepest growl and the sharpest tongue this side of *Duke Nukem*. Every character has been nailed perfectly, from the sultry Judge Anderson to the hissing Death. Every line is quotable, and many are references to the pulp sci-fi of our age. Dredd is oft to bellow "Dead or alive, you're coming with me!"

Another impressive feature is that Dredd doesn't merely kill perps, he can arrest them too. Some take more persuading than others. A peacenik waving some hippy slogan in your face may "assume the position" with just a warning. Others are harder nuts to crack – requiring a bullet or two, or the conspicuous death of a friend, to come quietly. And of course, others won't rescind no matter how nicely you ask.

Upholding the law has three effects. First, it keeps your "Law Meter" high – shoot too many innocents and the SJS take your badge. Second, it unlocks goodies – your score is the sum of the sentences you hand out each level. And third, it gives you wood. There's something really satisfying about bringing some two-bit punk to account for their anti-social ways. Plus, every arrest draws another one-liner out of Dredd – "There's an iso-cube with your name on it."

A variation on cel-shading, called "graphic novel rendering" is employed to colour the inhabitants of the Big Meg. It actually looks quite good: functional, yet more gritty and understated than the neon intensity of, say, *Jet Set Radio Future*. Lip synch and cut scenes vary in



★ Futuristic tree-huggers get short shrift from Judge Dredd.



Shotgun justice is handed out freely.

# DREDD VERSUS DEATH **Z**REVIEW

# OFF THE CUFF>>> Arresting the perps in Mega-City One

YOU'LL FIND many perps lack the moral fibre to put up a concerted fight for long, and some will surrender plaintively or abusively, kneeling prone and ready for arrest. While you don't have to bring them in, it may be part of your objective or gain you extra points (for unlockable multiplayer modes and characters) to cuff them and leave 'em for support teams to pick up. Occasionally a graphical glitch shows the cuffs hanging from one hand, but don't worry - the perp is still down.



♠ Done for illegal hamster possession. The shame.



♠ For assault on a Judge, it's life imprisonment.



↑ Illegal graffiti artists are known as Scrawlers.

# **BONUS**

# >>> LET'S SPLIT Arcade modes include pretty basic bot arenas with miniature robots or zombies, and up to four-player split-screen multiplayer modes including Judge Vs. Perps, Elimination, Team Elimination, Deathmatch, Team Deathmatch and Vampire. Unfortunately many of the arenas are

none too inspiring.

# ➤ GRUD ON A GREENIE! Every character speaks the trademark language of the comic. The generic future swearword uttered throughout is "Drokk," and occasionally "Stomm" on more grave occasions. No one gets called "Spug," though. This is a family game!

# "A PEACENIK WAVING SOME HIPPY SLOGAN IN YOUR FACE MAY "ASSUME THE POSITION" WITH JUST A WARNING."

quality, but the directing is pretty good. The main detraction from the visuals comes from the lingering knowledge that the game was developed simultaneously for PS2 and Gamecube. The polygons are fine, but there don't seem to be quite enough of them.

Co-op mode is great. Two human players, have the chance to employ simple battle tactics against the mostly predictable, gamey opponents. The primitive environments scale well to split screen, permitting a clear view for concentrating fire. Multiplayer modes are

comprehensive, if derivative. Arcade levels allow quick bouts of action, and are based on notable characters and events from the Dredd universe. For instance, in Walter's Wobot Wampage, you have to rub out a horde of helper robots that bear an uncanny likeness to Dredd's lisping cybernetic housekeeper.

There is the odd bug, but nothing severe enough to make the game crash. The occasional sound or graphical glitch, or an NPC getting stuck in some stairs, but nothing drastic. The biggest weakness of *Dredd Vs Death* is also

its greatest strength. Namely, it assumes you know the comic inside-out. The tutorial, for instance, only goes through the standard and ricochet rounds of Dredd's Lawgiver Pistol. One has to use trial and error to figure out when its appropriate to resort to high explosive or heat-seeking bullets. But that just goes to show the game's saving grace: when was the last time you got to fire a gun with heat-seeking bullets?

The crucial elements of the Judge Dredd comics shine through in Dredd Vs Death: black humour and big guns.





↑ Medic Judges can be zombies too. Nasty head cold that. Eww...



↑ Guess this Dark Judge's name. Not Water.



♠ Perps can be arrested and then cuffed.



Vast, if sparse environments. Smooth frame-rate, and comically overblown ragdoll physics.

## **STYLE**

Rendering does an uncanny job of mimicking the style of the comics. Gaudy future fashions abound.

# IMMERSION

Frequent deaths result in angerfuelled emotional investment. Lots of British accents in the US city.

# LIFESPAN

Main game runs about 20 hours, plus higher difficulties, arcade levels and ho-hum multiplayer.

# + EXPLOSIVE ACTION. + TASTEFUL USE OF SARCASM.

BIG GUNS.

# BAD POINTS

+ VERY AUTHENTIC.

- BUGGY.
- LEVELS ARE CRATE-FILLED CLICHES.

# SUMMERY

Satisfying, but it could have been a lot better. Cheesy, hardcore action and a wry edge will appeal to *Dredd* fans.

OFFICIAL AUSTRALIAN XBOX MAGAZINE **SCORE** 

8.1//

- >>> PREVIOUSLY: Interview Issue 19
- >>> COMING SOON: Hints Issue 22





↑ Sam Fisher's got nothing on our Gromit. Make like The Krypton Factor and get down the zip line.

# They may be made of plasticine but they're not soft

# WALLACE & GROMIT IN PROJECT ZOO

# WORDS: ANDY IRVING

DEVELOPER: FRONTIER STUD. / BAM ENT.

PUBLISHER: ACCLAIM

RELEASE DATE: OUT NOW

PLAYERS: 1

WEBSITE: WWW.BAM4FUN.COM



GUIDE THE duo through 24 perilous levels in a bid to thwart the evil Feathers McGraw. UNION JACK boxer shorts, The Great Escape and bulldogs aside, for us Wallace and Gromit epitomise everything that's British. A nononsense, cheese-loving, slightly eccentric inventor and his faithful companion get into all manner of scrapes and

adventures, end up saving the day and are always home in time for tea.

The brainchild of Nick Park and Aardman Studios, and the greatest claymation duo since Morph and Chas, Wallace and Gromit's first outing in the gaming world finally arrives in the form of *Project Zoo*.

The first thing that strikes you is the graphical quality. Nick Park worked closely with the developers, and his babies are perfectly recreated on screen. The intro graphics are stunning, with great real-time lighting and a high polygon count giving texture to the characters.

The storyline is straight out of an episode too, with the pair's arch nemesis Feathers

McGraw imprisoning all the baby animals in the zoo, and enslaving their parents to mine the rich hoard of diamonds buried underneath. Slipping past his guards in a Trojan penguin (seriously), it's now down to our intrepid duo to liberate the incarcerated youngsters and rescue their parents.

The game kicks off as a standard 3D platformer, but as you work your way through each level, the true scale of each environment strikes you. The stages are huge, and thoughtful level designs see the action progressing vertically as well as horizontally, as you travel through the jungle, underground mines and Arctic regions in your quest. Gromit is well animated, and has a series of jumps, kicks and punches to aid him on his way. Simple button combos result in some very funny breakdancing moves too, whilst health is replenished via a supply of Jacob's crackers. Wallace is always a wolf whistle away, and by collecting nuts and bolts he'll fix and modify any broken machinery you come across into helpful gadgets such as Banana Guns, Spring Boots and Gyrocopters.

The game's funny too, shot through with the same sense of humour as the TV show. The environments are hugely detailed, and each level also gives you access, by solving simple puzzles, to bonus levels containing more power-ups and unlockables. The downside of this is that these levels must be completed in full before you can return to the main game, which sometimes proves infuriating.

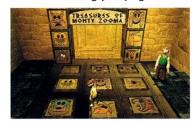
Aside from this and the occasional skewed camera angle, *Project Zoo* delivers a polished platformer which oozes humour and personality, as well as proving that wearing tank tops can be cool.



↑ Collect coins to see cool bonus movies.



★ Free these little guys to progress.



↑ Light the tiles in the right order to pass.



↑ TNT and fire don't always mix.



# POWER

>>> GOING FOR GOLD By collecting gold

medallions you can unlock 12 mini movies, including an interview with Nick Park about making the game.

Looks fantastic. Perfectly rendered characters, huge levels and it's all lit beautifully.

# STYLE

Feels just like you're involved in a real episode, with plenty of humour and in-jokes.

# **IMMERSION**

Basic but addictive gameplay, with tons of puzzles to solve and ongoing tutorials.

# LIFESPAN

There's plenty of stuff to find and unlock, so it should take a fair while to crack.

# + NIC HUI + GRE

# GOOD POINTS

- NICE SENSE OF HUMOUR.
- \* GREAT GRAPHICS
  AND ATMOSPHERE

# BAD POINTS

- CAN ONLY PLAY AS GROMIT.
- CAMERA SOMETIMES A BIT AWKWARD.

# SUMMARY

A consummate platformer which proves that a great game and licence can work together. That's grand, lad.

OFFICIAL AUSTRALIAN XBOX MAGAZINE **SCORE** 

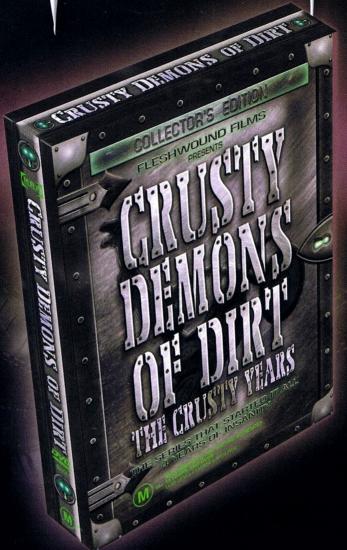
8.2/10

- >>> PREVIOUSLY: Incoming Issue 16
- >>> COMING SOON: Hints Issue 23

# CRUSTIDE ONS M 15+

CRUSTY DEMONS,

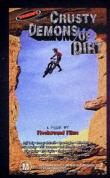
THE SERIES THAT
HELPED LAUNCH THE
FREESTYLE REVOLUTION,
RETURNS WITH A
VENGEANCE IN THIS
SPECIALLY PRICED LIMITED EDITION BOX SET,
FEATURING FOUR YEARS
OF INSANITY, AND THE
SICKEST MOTORCROSS
STUNTS PERFORMED BY
A WHO'S WHO OF TOP
WORLD-CLASS RIDERS,
WITH A DRIVING HEAVY
METAL MUSIC SCORE.



The first Crusty
Demons collection
includes four complete
programmes: Crusty
Demons, Crusty Demons
II, Crusty Demons III
(II and III available for
the first time on DVD)
and Crusty 4: God Bless
the Freaks with a total
of 43 minutes of
bonus footage.

# THE CRUSTY YEARS















FLESIGEAR

www.mraentertainment.com







↑ Blow apart this driving range. We don't remember seeing a level like this during Tiger Woods PGA Tour 2004.

# Let battle commence! It's time for wriggly warfare

# WORMS =

# WORDS: ANDY IRVING

**DEVELOPER: TEAM 17 SOFTWARE** 

PUBLISHER: SEGA

**RELEASE DATE: OUT NOW** 

PLAYERS: 1-4

WEBSITE: WWW.WORMS3D.COM



**LEAD YOUR** invertebrate army to victory in this 3D puzzler with the most bizarre weapons ever.

"LEAVE ME alone!" This cry rang out around countless living rooms to much merriment when the first Worms game appeared on PC and consoles nearly ten years ago. What started out as a comical, turn-based combat game quickly

became a global success and spawned several sequels. Now, the title has evolved from its 2D roots into glorious 3D.

The premise is simple. Control a team of plucky, military-trained earthworms, and use outlandish weapons to obliterate the opposite team. It sounds simple, but the real challenge comes in the art of firing the weapons. It's completely down to the player to judge the aim, trajectory and power of their attacks, taking into account wind direction and speed. It sounds tricky, but soon becomes second nature, and you'll enjoy discovering the characteristics of each weapon. A wide arsenal is at your disposal, from Bazookas, Grenades and Cluster Bombs to Homing Missiles and Air-Strikes. Things take a

turn for the ludicrous with Banana Bombs, Sheep and Exploding Old Ladies. Clearly, this isn't your standard warfare strategy.

Although notorious as a multiplayer game, W3D has a comprehensive single-player mode. It starts with a tutorial, a quick game against a CPU opponent, and then it's on to Campaign mode with more than 30 maps to conquer.

There's a strong vein of off-the-wall humour, typified by some of the mission names, such as 'In Space, No One Can Hear You Clean'. Add to this a huge Challenge mode, where you can unlock weapons, maps and secret missions, and you've got a pretty complete one-player game. With random positioning options, customisable levels and weapon distribution, the game provides millions of different permutations.

Gameplay is, like the game itself, a novel yet simple concept. Each level can be played a variety of ways, and most areas are accessible. The 3D environment expands the strategic element, and a fully deformable landscape offers great scope for creating caves and shields.

Surprisingly, multiplayer is where Worms 3D falls short. Up to four gamers can play, each controlling a team, but all sharing a single pad. This may promote a more social side of things, but it's antiquated. There's no System Link either. And while the PC Worms games were popular online, Worms 3D doesn't support Xbox Live.

The camera is the only other gripe. It's inverted during normal play, but it reverses when zoomed in. This is really frustrating, particularly when you're trying to select your weapon, aim and fire within a 60-second time limit.

Worms 3D provides a good deal of fun and frolics but fails to be the great multiplayer game it could have been.



>> WIND ASSISTED Watch the wind meter in the bottom corner of the screen - direction and strength affect the trajectory of your chosen weapons.



This little fella's face says it all.



↑ Multiplayer madness in full swing.



Incoming! Time to duck and cover.



↑ Choose your weapons. Mine's a sheep.



There's a fully interactive 3D environment, but it's nothing too taxing for the Xbox.

## STYLE

Hilarious dialogue and maps but the characters and landscapes lack real detail.

# IMMERSION

lump right in and blast away. It might take a while to master your technique, though

# LIFESPAN

Huge multiplayer and theoretically limitless map combinations mean you'll be at this for a long time.

# WEAPONS. BAD POINTS

## GOOD POINTS

- + GREAT SENSE OF HUMOUR.
- + LOADS OF MAPS. + MORE EXTRAVAGANT

ANNOYING CAMERA. NO SYSTEM LINK OR XBOX LIVE SUPPORT.

# SUMMARY

**Entertaining sequel that fans** of the series will enjoy but let down by the frustrating camera controls and no Xbox Live.

OFFICIAL AUSTRALIAN XBOX MAGAZINE **SCORE** 



- >PREVIOUSLY: It's only just wormed its way into our mag
- >>> COMING SOON: Hints Issue 23







AN EPIC ROLE-PLAYING GAME IN A HUGE AND ENTIRELY INTERACTIVE WORLD

"as incredible as it is in scope, though, Morrowind  $^{(\!R\!)}$  doesn't have quite the Gameplay innovation of Arx Fatalis"

DAILYGAME.NET

"A UNIQUE STEALTH/RPG
DEVELOPED WITH THE PARTICIPATION
OF THIEF: DARK PROJECT AND
SYSTEM SHOCK DEVELOPERS"

IMPRESSIVE VISUAL EFFECTS



LAUNCH SPELLS

VAST TWISTING MAZES TO EXPLORE



HIDE IN THE SHADOWS

DEADLY FOES AT EVERY TURN



CHARGE AND SLAY

DREAMCATCHER

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Available from all good Software Retailers - Australia-Wide





↑ Beckham's on the ball and looking dangerous. Our advice? Use Cole to do whatever it takes to stop him.

# A potential FIFA beater or yet another own goal?

# CLUB FOOTBALL

# WORDS: STEVE O'ROURKE

DEVELOPER: CODEMASTERS
PUBLISHER: CODEMASTERS
RELEASE DATE: OUT NOW
PLAYERS: 1-4
WEBSITE: WWW.CODEMASTERS.COM



IT'S SOCCER! Only this time you can buy one of 17 versions, all tailored to your specific team. LOVE IT OR loathe it, FIFA has been the only Xbox soccer title worth playing, dominating the market like Man Utd playing in the Sunday League. But now the tables are turned, because Club Football will give FIFA some serious competition. There are 17 different

versions of the game, each catering to fans with particular team loyalties. In truth the specialised content is pretty token. The front end encourages you to play through solely as the team of the game, but the customisation options let you play the competitions as the other teams. Sure, the players look like their real-life counterparts, and you get memorabilia to unlock and player stats to pore over – but that's about it. The game could be better without this marketing ploy because sports titles don't need gimmicks to succeed, they just need to be an accurate to the sport.

The on-pitch action is a fluid, and it doesn't commit the foul of making each player a star who can win the game as an individual. No gluefoot here either: spreading the ball and

finding space is the only way to play - the cornerstone of authentic soccer action.

There's no real freestyle elements at all, so you won't be dazzling the defence with stepovers, or dummies. The greatest complexity of control is the one-two pass and the lofted through ball. The downside of this simplified control is that you also lose a sharp turns button option. Shaking off a defender seems to be based solely on your pace, with the sprint trigger used to skim your opponent with speed.

Player control is very responsive. There are, however, some grey areas when the characters can feel sluggish in a free ball situation, resulting in the double-button action where you gain possession only to wastefully kick it away. CF stakes its claim as a worthy contender in how it plays - and it plays very well. Computer controlled team-mates will run into space and make themselves available for the ball and, similarly, a defender would rather kick the ball into touch than lose possession to you. But there are erratic abnormalities. The goalkeeper is schizophrenic - one minute he's unstoppable in a one-on-one, and the next he's letting the lamest of shots bobble beneath him (especially from corners). Safe hands? Only sometimes...

There are plenty of unresolved issues (like crossing options, shot and deadball accuracy) and as a result, *CF* lacks the sophistication of titles that are years into their franchise. But soccer games are notoriously hard to develop, and for a first attempt this immediately places *Club Football* as a worthy competitor.

With FIFA 2004 looming, soccer fans may want to wait and see if EA's next soccer offering is worth the spend. But the good news for all soccer fans is this: CF is actually a worthwhile alternative to play.





↑ The players look ultra-realistic.



↑ Oww... right where it hurts, too.



↑ Clear it, you muppet!



# POWER

>>> TEAM SPIRIT
There are the 17
versions of the game

available, including Arsenal, Aston Villa, Chelsea, Liverpool and Manchester United.

Very little slowdown and quick loads, but soccer isn't the most taxing of disciplines for Xbox

# STYLE

A little too basic to be called stylish - visuals are okay but the front end looks like a rush job.

# IMMERSION

Great for team players, but if you want to be the star scorer remember there's no I in team.

# LIFESPAN

Only six trophies, but play against opposition with a pulse and it's limitless fun.

# FOOD POINTS IT ACTUALLY PLAYS LIKE SOCCER! GREAT FOUR-PLAYER MULTIPLAYER.

# + GENERALLY GOOD AI.

 GOALIES ARE RANDOM
 LACKS SOPHISTICATED CONTROL OPTIONS.

## SUMMARY.

A potential FIFA 2004 beater, CF has all the makings of a highly promising franchise. Let's hope they make another one!



- >>> PREVIOUSLY: Incoming Issue 21
- >>> COMING SOON: Hints Issue 23

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03	Plasma Inferno (Shoot 'em up!)																
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036	Shizuka (Platform)																
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009	Wizard Pinball (Arcade)																
143	Zoys Rescue Mission (Platform)																

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MODE LOCATION

# REVIEWS DIRECTORY

Tapping the tree of Official Australian Xbox Magazine to glean the thick essence of review



These are quite simply the best games available for the console, scoring a whopping 8.5 or more. They must be played. You have our personal guarantee that each and every one of them is utterly fantastic, so go out and buy them right now! Well, go on then, what are you waiting for?

# **COLIN MCRAE RALLY 04**

**REVIEWED:** Issue 21 TYPE: Racing "Rallying at its prettiest, grandest and most absorbing. The best that money can buy





# THE TIME SWEEPER

**REVIEWED:** Issue 09 TYPE: Platform "Takes platform gaming into uncharted territory. Essential"



**AFL LIVE 2004 ALIENS VS PREDATOR: EXTINCTION** AMPED: FREESTYLE SNOWBOARDING ANTZ EXTREME RACING **ATV: QUAD POWER RACING 2 AZURIK: RISE OF PERATHIA** BARBARIAN **BATTLE ENGINE AQUILA BATMAN: VENGEANCE BIG MUTHA TRUCKERS BLACKSTONE: MAGIC AND STEEL BLADE II** 

Reviewed Issue 21 Type Sports Reviewed Issue 21 Type Real-time Strategy Reviewed Issue 01 Type Snowboarding Reviewed Issue 07 Type Racing Type Racing Reviewed Issue 13 Reviewed Issue 03 Type Action/adventure Reviewed Issue 07 Type Beat-'em-up Type Mech shoot-'em-up Reviewed Issue 11 Reviewed Issue 02 Type Action/adventure Reviewed Issue 11 Type Driving Type Arcade RPG Reviewed Issue 11 Reviewed Issue 08 Type Action

"Worth a look for AFL fanatics, but everyone else should steer clear" Score 64 "Virtually the only RTS available on Xbox, but it's not a very good one" Score 6.6 'Addictive, impressive and deep. Makes a perfect landing.' Score 8.7 "Average, and too awkward for its target audience" Score 5.0 "This is a solid, entertaining game with some great mini-challenges" Score 7.7 "A colourful but underwhelming fantasy adventure" Score 2.4 "A solid, playable arcade beat-'em-up with some nice ideas" Score 7.4 "Good shooting and strategy mix. Arcade shooter with depth" Score 8.0 "Bat-lore heavy, but too easy, too samey and nothing new" Score 6.8 "Original idea, but let down by poor handling and execution" Score 6.6 "A straightforward action RPG, but there are better ones on Xbox" Score 7.0 "Violent, repetitive and enjoyable in bursts. Lots of vamps to kill" Score 5.2



## **BUFFY THE VAMPIRE** SLAYER

REVIEWED: Issue 04 TYPE: Fighting/Adventure 'The perfect tie-in to the cult television series'





# **DEAD OR ALIVE 3**

**REVIEWED:** Issue 01 TYPE: Beat-'em-up "Accessible, slick and as satisfying as any beat-'em-up. This is a visual benchmark'

Score 7.4

Score 7.4

Score 1.0

Score90

Score 5.5

Score 8.1

Score 4.0

Score 3.5

Score 7.9

Score 7.1

Score 75

Score 3.5



**BLOOD OMEN 2 BLOOD WAKE BLOODRAYNE BRUCE LEE: QUEST OF THE DRAGON BURNOUT 2 CAPCOM VS SNK 2 EO** CEL DAMAGE **CHAMPIONSHIP MANAGER: SEASON 02/03** CHASE **CIRCUS MAXIMUS COLIN MCRAE RALLY 3 COMMANDOS 2: MEN OF COURAGE CONFLICT: DESERT STORM II CRASH CRASH BANDICOOT: THE WRATH OF CORTEX CRAZY TAXI 3** CRIMSON SEA **DARK ANGEL DARK SUMMIT** 

Reviewed Issue 02 Type Action/adventure Reviewed Issue 02 Type Racing/action Reviewed Issue 15 Type Action/Adventure Reviewed Issue 08 Type Beat-'em-up Reviewed Issue 16 Type Racing Reviewed Issue 13 Type Beat-'em-up Reviewed Issue 02 Type Racing Reviewed Issue 11 Type Management sim Reviewed Issue 08 Type Action Reviewed Issue 05 Type Racing Reviewed Issue 09 Type Racing Reviewed Issue 05 Type Strategy Reviewed Issue 03 Type Driving Reviewed Issue 03 Type Platform Reviewed Issue 06 Type Arcade driving Reviewed Issue 14 Type Action/shooter Reviewed Issue 14 Type Action

Score 85 "Linear gameplay dampens the otherwise vamped-up action" "Much of the time you're fighting the controls instead of the enemy" "A lot of cool vampire-related ideas that sadly don't come together" "Appallingly shoddy game that's an insult to the great man" "An incredible improvement over the original. One of the best on Xbox." Score 8.9 "If it's 2D combat you're after, you're not going to do better than this" "Dreamy looking, but hectic and frustrating gameplay" "Doesn't break new ground, but will keep fans interested for ages" "Bare-bones stunt action that makes you want to scream 'Cut!' "Sub-standard, gimmick-driven racer lacking in almost every way" "A highly realistic racer, but the visuals are a bit of a let down." Score 80 "Extremely tough but rewarding war game. Some control issues" Reviewed Issue 21 Type Squad-based shooter "A huge improvement on the original, and top fun to play, too" Score 8.3 "Instant, lo-fi, demolition derby fun for the few hours that it lasts" Score 6.6 "One of the best cartoony worlds, but has no new tricks" "Lots of fun with great mini-games but similar to previous versions" "Satisfies the strongest bloodlust while making sure it never gets boring" Score 8.2 "Repetitive gameplay. Dull, uninspiring levels. You won't play for long" Score 4.8 "Half-hearted gameplay fleshed out with a storybook aspect"



## **BALDUR'S GATE: DARK ALLIANCE**

**REVIEWED: Issue 08** TYPE: Action RPG "Absorbing RPG with a healthy dose of hack 'n' slashing'

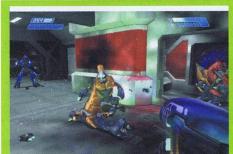




#### **ELDER SCROLLS III: MORROWIND**

**REVIEWED: Issue 07** TYPE: RPG "An adventure of incredible scope and depth'





## HALO **REVIEWED:** Issue 01 TYPE: FPS

'Quite simply, a masterpiece and without question one of the best games ever made"





## **DOA XTREME BEACH** VOLLEYBALL

**REVIEWED:** Issue 14 TYPE: Sports/Simulation "Entertaining and original. A lot smarter than you'd think."



**DAVE MIRRA FREESTYLE BMX 2 DAVID BECKHAM SOCCER DEADLY SKIES DEAD TO RIGHTS** DEFENDER DR MUTO **DYNASTY WARRIORS 3 EGGO MANIA ENCLAVE ENTER THE MATRIX ESPN WINTER X GAMES SNOWBOARDING 2** F1 2002

**FIFA 2003** FREEDOM FIGHTERS Reviewed Issue 02 Type BMX Reviewed Issue 04 Type Football Reviewed Issue 03 Type Flight sim Reviewed Issue 12 Type Action/shooter Reviewed Issue 14 Type Shoot-'em-up Reviewed Issue 14 Type Platform Reviewed Issue 10 Type Action/adventure

Reviewed Issue 08 Type Puzzle Reviewed Issue 06 Type Action/adventure Reviewed Issue 16 Type Action Reviewed Issue 05 Type Snowboarding

Reviewed Issue 03 Type Racing Reviewed Issue 10 Type Football Reviewed Issue 20 Type Action/shooter "Pulling tricks is fun, but poor controls spoil the experience" "Outdated footy that should be left alone, even by fans of Becks" "Not fast or exciting enough to fulfil that fighter pilot dream" "Some fun gunfights but too much dull, unarmed combat" "Prompts a bit of nostalgia, but it doesn't have that vital spark" "Enjoyable if you've not played loads of other cartoony platformers" "Pure aggression and drama. Masses of characters and battlefields" "Decent two-player, brain-scratching fun" "Involving, but the catalogue of annoyances becomes annoying" "A clever tie-in to the film, with some excellent Bullet-Time action" "A decent boarding game but a bit clumsy to play. Lots of features" "Solid, with all a fan could want, but it's evolution, not revolution" "Accurate, playable and authentic, but the controls are flawed"

Score 6.9 Score 4.2 Score 5.2 Score 7.0 Score 6.6 Score 7.0 Score 7.8 Score 6.5 Score 5.8 Score 8.5 Score 7.0 Score 7.1 Score 84 "Think Brute Force in contemporary settings, only not quite as good" Score 7.9



# **IET SET RADIO FUTURE**

**REVIEWED:** Issue 01 TYPE: Platform/skating "Supremely playable and very stylish. Huge, intricate levels"





# **DEATHROW**

**REVIEWED:** Issue 06 **TYPE:** Future Sports "The closest thing there is to future sport perfection. Speedball fans will love it!" ORE: 9.3



FREESTYLE METAL X **FUTURAMA FURIOUS KARTING GAUNTLET DARK LEGACY GENMA ONIMUSHA GRAVITY GAMES: STREET.VERT.DIRT GROUP S CHALLENGE GUN VALKYRIE** HARRY POTTER AND THE CHAMBER OF SECRETS **HITMAN 2: SILENT ASSASSIN HUNTER: THE RECKONING** INDIANA JONES AND THE EMPEROR'S TOMB **JAMES BOND 007 IN... AGENT UNDER FIRE** IAMES BOND 007: NIGHTFIRE

**IURASSIC PARK: OPERATION GENESIS** 

Reviewed Issue 21 Type Extreme Sports Reviewed Issue 18 Type Action Shooter Reviewed Issue 13 Type Racing Reviewed Issue 04 Type Arcade adventure Reviewed Issue 02 Type Action/adventure Reviewed Issue 09 Type BMX Reviewed Issue 20 Type Racing Reviewed Issue 02 Type Shoot-'em-up Reviewed Issue 10 Type Action/adventure Reviewed Issue 08 Type Action Reviewed Issue 05 Type Action/adventure Reviewed Issue 13 Type Action/adventure Reviewed Issue 03 Type Football Reviewed Issue 05 Type FPS Reviewed Issue 11 Type Action/shooter Reviewed Issue 15 Type World-builder

"Huge maps; and surprisingly the best motocross game on Xbox" "As hilarious as the cartoon, but the action is a tad repetitive" "Quickly grows tiring thanks to wafer-thin gameplay and average looks" "A fun-free game that's sluggish and frequently confusing to play" "No-frills hack-'n'-slash that takes a while to crack. Fun, but flawed" "A horrible extreme sports game. Dire" "A decent stab at a realistic racing sim, but a few flies in the ointment" "Not for the faint-hearted, this has intense, skilful action all the way" "A good looking, highly playable and authentic slice of Potter Pie" "Great stealth game that rewards patience and planning" "A repetitive rumble. Good, unclean fun but multiplayer is messy" "Captures the movies brilliantly, but plays too much like Buffy". "Fans should treat this bitterly disappointing sequel with caution" "Makes you feel like Bond, but the bad guys interaction is stupid" "Looks great. Entertaining but nothing particularly groundbreaking" "Want to be master of your own universe? You'll waste serious time"

Score 7.3 Score 5.0 Score 39 Score 7.0 Score 0.8 Score 7.8 Score 8.2 Score 7.0 Score 8.3 Score 8.3 Score 7.1 Score 5.1 Score 7.2 Score 7.5 Score 8.0

Score 8.0

HOUSESHARE WITH THREE SUPERMODELS, BUT IT LOOKS



# **MADDEN NFL 2004**

REVIEWED: Issue 21 TYPE: US Sports "A masterful simulation of American football. Playmaker is the real clincher this year'





# **MOTOGP**

**REVIEWED:** Issue 03 TYPE: Racing "Hotly contested bike racing combined with a perfect control method. A real winner"





# REVIEWS DIRECTORY

Tapping the tree of Official Xbox Magazine to glean the thick essence of review



# THE XBOX >

The best games for the console, scoring a whopping 8.5 or more. Each and every one of them is utterly fantastic.



# PANZER DRAGOON ORTA

REVIEWED: Issue 13 TYPE: Shoot -'em-up "Cutting-edge looks and classic blasting. Gorgeous" SCORE: 9.0



# **SOUL CALIBUR II**

REVIEWED: Issue 19 TYPE: Fighting "Unquestionably the best weapons-based fighter made to date. A must-buy" SCORE: 9.4

**KELLY SLATER'S PRO SURFER KNOCKOUT KINGS 2002 KUNG FU CHAOS LEGENDS OF WRESTLING** LEGENDS OF WRESTLING II **LMA MANAGER 2003** LOONS: THE FIGHT FOR FAME **LOTUS CHALLENGE MACE GRIFFIN: BOUNTY HUNTER MARVEL VS. CAPCOM 2 MAT HOFFMAN'S PRO BMX 2 MAX PAYNE** MECHASSAULT **MEDAL OF HONOR FRONTLINE** METAL DUNGEON **METAL GEAR SOLID 2: SUBSTANCE MICRO MACHINES** MIDNIGHT CLUB II **MINORITY REPORT** MONOPOLY PARTY **MX2002 FEATURING RICKY CARMICHAEL MX SUPERFLY** NBA2K3 **NBA INSIDE DRIVE 2002** 

Reviewed Issue 09 Type Surfing Reviewed Issue 03 Type Boxing Reviewed Issue 14 Type Party Type Wrestling Reviewed Issue 05 Reviewed Issue 10 Type Wrestling Reviewed Issue 10 Type Management sim Reviewed Issue 08 Type Cartoon action Reviewed Issue 11 Type Driving Reviewed Issue 19 Type Shooter Reviewed Issue 10 Type Beat-'em-up Reviewed Issue 09 Type BMX Reviewed Issue 02 Type Action Reviewed Issue 11 Type Mech shoot-'em-up Reviewed Issue 11 Type FPS Reviewed Issue 11 Type RPG Reviewed Issue 13 Type Action/adventure Reviewed Issue 10 Type Driving Reviewed Issue 19 Type Driving Reviewed Issue 12 Type Action Reviewed Issue 13 Type Party Reviewed Issue 04 Type Motocross Reviewed Issue 13 Type Racing Reviewed Issue 08 Type Adventure Reviewed Issue 14 Type Basketball Reviewed Issue 03 Type Basketball

"Cool ideas mixed with aquabatics and satisfying play. Original fun" Score 8.2 "An excellently presented but scrappy punch-'em-up" Score 63 "An excellently presented punch-'em-up with loads of variety Score 8.0 "Nostalgic appeal for wrestling fans. Causes chuckles in multiplayer" Score 6.0 "Lots of modes and characters. A must-have for fans" Score 6.0 "Be the gaffer without being blinded by science and statistics" Score 8.0 "Short-lived fun, but all done in real Looney Tunes style" Score 65 "Umpteen modes, stunts, and challenges, but cars look dreary" Score 6.5 "An unexpectedly high quality first-person shooter" Score 8.4 "Fun, but the limits of 2D combat are all too obvious" Score 8.2 "Average extreme sports game with dodgy controls" Score 6.8 "Stylish, repetitive and worthy of your time... Bullet Time is brilliant" Score 85 "Stands tall as one of the best online games available" Score 8.0 "An average FPS that doesn't really impress on Xbox' Score 5.7 "Strong strategy element, but repetitive gameplay and no story" Score 5.0 "Lots to admire but constant cutscene interruptions can really grate" Score 7.5 "Sacrifices longevity for arcade action and short-term fun" Score 72 "City-wide street racing - a meaner version of Midtown 3" Score 7.8 "Offers little more than an extremely repetitive fight fest" Score 5.5 "A solid take on the game but it's not the most fun multiplayer out there"Score 6.5 "A limp yet slightly enjoyable dirt biker with two-player mileage" Score 5.0 "Much better than MX2002 but far from being a classic biking game' Score 65 "Bonkers-but-beautiful series of increasingly difficult logic puzzles Score 7.2 "A solid b-ball game with all the fundamentals. Excellent presentation" Score 9.0 "A decent, playable basketball game, but not brilliant by any means" Score 7.2



# PROJECT GOTHAM RACING

REVIEWED: Issue 01 TYPE: Driving "An epic racer blending accuracy with entertainment" SCORE: 8.9



# STAR WARS: KNIGHTS OF THE OLD REPUBLIC

REVIEWED: Issue 20 TYPE: RPG "Best RPG on Xbox to date; a must for Star Wars fans" SCORE: 9.5



# RETURN TO CASTLE WOLFENSTEIN

REVIEWED: Issue 15
TYPE: First-person shooter
"Visceral, fast-paced multiplayer
action. A one of a kind"

Score 7.6

Score 74

Score 75

Score 8.2

Score 7.2

Score 4.9

Score 9.2

Score 8.2

Score 7.0

Score 8.2

Score 8.2

Score 7.4

Score 84

Score 2.0

Score 3.7

Score 45

Score 8.1

Score 7.6

Score 7.0

Score 7.2

Score 1.9

Score 7.4

Score 8.2

Score 8.0

Score 7.6

Score 7.0

**NBA INSIDE DRIVE 2003 NBA LIVE 2002 NBA LIVE 2003 NBA STREET VOL.2 NEED FOR SPEED: HOT PURSUIT 2** NEW LEGENDS NFL2K3 **NFL FEVER 2003** NHL2K3 **NHL 2002 NHL 2003** NHL HITZ 20-02 NHL HITZ 20-03 **NICKELODEON PARTY BLAST** NIGHTCASTER **NIGHTCASTER II: EQUINOX OTOGI: MYTH OF DEMONS OUTLAW GOLF PIRATES OF THE CARIBBEAN** PRISONER OF WAR **PRO TENNIS WTA TOUR PROJECT ZERO QUANTUM REDSHIFT RALLY FUSION: RACE OF CHAMPIONS RAYMAN 3 HOODLUM HAVOC** RED CARD

Reviewed Issue 11 Type Basketball Reviewed Issue 02 Type Basketball Reviewed Issue 11 Type Basketball Reviewed Issue 15 Type Basketball Reviewed Issue 09 Type Racing Reviewed Issue 04 Type Action/adventure Reviewed Issue 14 Type American football Reviewed Issue 10 Type American football Type Ice hockey Reviewed Issue 14 Reviewed Issue 02 Type Ice hockey Reviewed Issue 08 Type Ice hockey Reviewed Issue 02 Type Ice hockey Reviewed Issue 09 Type Ice hockey Reviewed Issue 13 Type Party Reviewed Issue 03 Type Adventure/shooter Reviewed Issue 14 Type Adventure/shooter Type Platform Reviewed Issue 21 Reviewed Issue 11 Type Golf Reviewed Issue 21 Type RPG Reviewed Issue 06 Type Puzzle/adventure Reviewed Issue 07 Type Tennis Type Survival horror Reviewed Issue 15 Reviewed Issue 08 Type Future racing Reviewed Issue 10 Type Driving Reviewed Issue 13 Type Platform Reviewed Issue 04 Type Football

"Good pace and novel passing system. Best b'ball game on Xbox" "B-ball's end-to-end flow is somehow distilled into tedium" "Accessible and immediate, but not much fun. Too easy to score" "Grab some friends and get stuck in. Easy to play but harder to master" "Good arcade racer that's a bit sluggish but offers solid driving fun" "A flawed game that quickly becomes repetitive and boring" "A great game but possibly too much of a challenge for total novices" "A blast to play. All the thrills and none of the pain of NFL" "Great player Al. Realistic physics. As good as ice hockey sims get" "Excellent multiplayer game with joyful passing and shooting" "Fast and furious, this is the definitive ice hockey experience" "Great-looking, polished and ultimately simple entertainment" "Big-laughs, high-adrenaline arcade ice hockey with depth" "Ummm, do they get any worse than this?" "Idea is good, but the execution isn't. Wizard? Not by any stretch" "Drab and messy from its box art to its core. Better than the original" "A slick action title with a sprinkling of RPG. A genuine surprise" "Light-hearted, but only three courses. Humour quickly wears off" "A lush RPG adventure that's as thrilling as it is frustrating." "Ambitious, intelligent strategy game marred by camera problems" "Unresponsive controls. Unrealistic action. Chronic lack of options" "A fresh take on survival horror. Extremely creepy and atmospheric" "Fast, hardcore racing fans will love it. Steep difficulty curve" "A great racing game for people who aren't hardcore racing fans" "Not just for kids. This 3D adventure will appeal across the board" "Innovative cartoon footy, but a lack of decent CPU opponents"



#### MORTAL KOMBAT: DEADLY ALLIANCE PEVIEWED: Issue 12

REVIEWED: Issue 12 TYPE: Fighting "Fast, brutal, and very rewarding. It's MK at its finest." SCORE: 8.8



# **TOP SPIN**

REVIEWED: Issue 21 TYPE: Sports "The best tennis game you'll find anywhere, much less on Xbox. Perfect for Xbox Live."



## **TIMESPLITTERS 2**

REVIEWED: Issue 09
TYPE: FPS
"The most complete FPS
package on Xbox. Rife with
features. Just buy it"
SCORE: 9.2





REVIEWED: Issue 12
TYPE: RPG
"Unique and requires patience, but it's a very highly detailed adventure"



RACING EVOLUZIONE
REVIEWED: Issue 12
TYPE: Racing
"A true showpiece of the
Xbox's graphical ability, and
an original racer to boot."
SCORE: 8.5



TOM CLANCY'S SPLINTER CELL
REVIEWED: Issue 10
TYPE: Stealth adventure
"Gritty, good-looking, exciting and amazingly atmospheric"

Score 70

Score 58

Score 7.4

Score 9.0

Score 4.0

Score 76

Score 6.8

Score 8.2

Score 4.0

Score 5.0

Score 40

Score 8.4

SCORE: 8.5
RED FACTION 2
REIGN OF FIRE
ROBOTECH: BATTLECRY
ROCKY
SEABLADE
SEGA GT 2002
SEGA SOCCER SLAM
SERIOUS SAM
SHADOW OF MEMORIES
SHREK
SHREK SUPER PARTY
SILENT HILL 2: INNER FEARS
SOLDIER OF FORTUNE II: DOUBLE HELIX
SPEED KINGS
SPIDER-MAN: THE MOVIE SPLASHDOWN
SPY HUNTER
SSX TRICKY
STAR WARS JEDI KNIGHT II: JEDI OUTCAST
STAR WARS: JEDI STARFIGHTER
STAR WARS: THE CLONE WARS
STATE OF EMERGENCY
STREET HOOPS
SUPER BUBBLE POP
SUPERMAN: THE MAN OF STEEL
TAO FENG: FIST OF THE LOTUS
TAZ: WANTED
TD OVERDRIVE
TERMINATOR: DAWN OF FATE
TENNIS MASTERS SERIES 2003
TEST DRIVE OFF-ROAD: WIDE OPEN
TETRIS WORLDS
THE GREAT ESCAPE
THE HULK
THE LOTR: THE FELLOWSHIP OF THE RING
THE LOTR: THE TWO TOWERS
THE SIMS
THE THING TOEJAM & EARL III: MISSION TO EARTH
TOM CLANCY'S GHOST RECON
TOM CLANCY'S GHOST RECON: ISLAND THUNDER
TOXIC GRIND
TRANSWORLD SNOWBOARDING
TRANSWORLD SURF
TUROK EVOLUTION
TY THE TASMANIAN TIGER
UFC: TAPOUT
V8 SUPERCARS RACE DRIVER
V-RALLY 3
VOODOO VINCE
WHACKED!
WORLD CHAMPIONSHIP SNOOKER 2003
WORLD RACING
WRECKLESS
WWE RAW 2: RUTHLESS AGGRESSION
X-MEN THE NEXT DIMENSION
X-MEN: WOLVERINE'S REVENGE

Reviewed Issue 16	Type Shooter
Reviewed Issue 10	Type Action/shooter
Reviewed Issue 09	
Reviewed Issue 09	Type Boxing
Reviewed Issue 17	Type Shoot-'em-up
Reviewed Issue 09	
Reviewed Issue 09	
Reviewed Issue 11	Type FPS
Reviewed Issue 10	Type Puzzle/adventure
Reviewed Issue 02	
Reviewed Issue 12	Type Party
Reviewed Issue 08	
Reviewed Issue 17	Type Shoote'em up
Reviewed Issue 18	Type Racing
Reviewed Issue 03	Type Platform
Reviewed Issue 07	Type Racing
Reviewed Issue 03	Type Driving/shoot-'em-
Reviewed Issue 05	
Reviewed Issue 09	Type Action/adventure
Reviewed Issue 04	
Reviewed Issue 18	Type Action shooter
Reviewed Issue 16	Type Action
Reviewed Issue 09	/1
Reviewed Issue 15	Type Puzzle
Reviewed Issue 10	Type Shoot-'em-up
Reviewed Issue 14	Type Fighting
Reviewed Issue 07	Type Platform
Reviewed Issue 04	Type Racing
Reviewed Issue 10	Type Shoot-'em-up
Reviewed Issue 10	Type Tennis
Reviewed Issue 03	,,
Reviewed Issue 09	
Reviewed Issue 20	
Reviewed Issue 16	Type Fighting/adventure
Reviewed Issue 09	
Reviewed Issue 13	Type Action/adventure
Reviewed Issue 15	Type Lifestyle sim
Reviewed Issue 08	
Reviewed Issue 12	Type Platformer
Reviewed Issue 09	
Reviewed Issue 21	Type Shoot-'em up
Reviewed Issue 10	Type BMX
Reviewed Issue 10	Type Snowboarding
Reviewed Issue 02	,,
Reviewed Issue 07	
Reviewed Issue 09	71
Reviewed Issue 03	
Reviewed Issue 14	Type Racing
Reviewed Issue 16	Type Racing
Reviewed Issue 21	Type Platform
Reviewed Issue 11	Type Party
Reviewed Issue 18	Type Sports
Reviewed Issue 14	Type Racing
Reviewed Issue 02	,,
Reviewed Issue 21	Type Wrasslin'
Reviewed Issue 12	Type Beat-'em-up
Reviewed Issue 16	Type Action/Adventure

"Linear, no Live options, but otherwise great multiplayer options" "Awkward controls and glitchy feel mean the potential is wasted" "Stylish anime designs, flashes of excitement, but not much depth" "Brilliantly evocative - this is multiplayer scrapping at its finest" "Interesting idea, but with terrible execution. Wait for Crimson Skies" "Excellent physics and handling, but not enough modes to play in" "Decent, frantic footy, best played with a friend. Ideal to rent" "Hectic blasting with a smattering of laughs. Slick and distinctive" "Drab, clumsy and low on enjoyment. A messy gimmick of a title" "A very plain and unrewarding kids' game" "No more sophisticated than a freebie Shockwave game" "Best survival horror on any console and the creepiest game ever" "A very decent port of the PC's brutal hit. Just a little formulaic, though" "Incredibly good fun - think Burnout 2 on bikes' "Highly enjoyable use of a licence; crackles with superhero smarts" "A truly entertaining jet ski racer with lots of great courses" n-up "Instantly enjoyable, totally superficial shoot-'em-up chase action" "Fast and furious, but it needed souping up to become great" "Better than SW: Obi-Wan, but it still doesn't pull up any trees" "A dose of enjoyable space combat needing more action to shine" "Explosive Star Wars action, and it's especially good in multiplayer" "Pointless, mindless violence throughout. A rental at best' "Unrewarding and uninvolving sports fest with little substance" "No addictive qualities, and full of bad techno cheese' "Boring levels, rubbish combat, and a dreadful control system" "Punishing and visually stunning, but lacking in grace and precision" "Swish cartoon graphics, but confusing and frustrating gameplay" "Bad handling makes this depressing" "Hardly any strategy, hugely derivative, and very repetitive" "Another tedious tennis title with almost nothing to recommend" "The lack of vehicle/ground interaction will drive you nuts" "Dilutes the impact of the original. Okay, but there's nothing new" "A formulaic WWII adventure, and a belated Hollywood licence" "A fun weekend bash with, strangely, a lot of slow-down" "A half-decent and smart-looking stab at the Rings world" "Great. Captures the spirit of Tolkien's world. Lots of extras for fans" "No visceral action but it's satisfying controlling little people's destinies" "Plenty of action and atmosphere but doesn't live up to its promise" "Avert your eyes! They've destroyed a classic!" "Confident and addictive. The strategy/action benchmark" "Deserves to be played. Fans will love the new missions" "A few imaginative tracks can't disguise the lack of flair or polish" "A looker, but boredom sets in once the views have been admired" "Some really great water effects but not enough variation" "Disappointing sequel. Feels older than the dinosaurs it features" "Not just for kids. There's plenty here to challenge older gamers" "Brutal two-player fighter but a bit one-dimensional if it's just you" "Sadly, V8 games make up only a tiny portion of this fab game" "The poor arcade-style cousin of the Colin McRae series' "A cute little platformer with a dark sense of humour" "Wacky atmosphere, but the controls are too unwieldy to be fun" "If you're into snooker, this game is the best of its kind" "Good technical racer, but a bit sterile. Nirvana for Mercedes fans" "Awesome demo of what Xbox can do, but not enough game in it" "The best wrestling game on Xbox - has every mode you could want" "Awkward controls, sluggish pace and uninspiring visuals' "Excellent mutant powers, but the controls are a bit unpolished"



# WAKEBOARDING UNLEASHED

REVIEWED: Issue 17 TYPE: Extreme sports "The best extreme sports title since Tony Hawk!" SCORE: 8.6



# TONY HAWK'S PRO SKATER 4

REVIEWED: Issue 11
TYPE: Skateboarding
"The most playable, complete
extreme sports experience"
SCORE: 8.6



# UNREAL CHAMPIONSHIP

REVIEWED: Issue 10
TYPE: Shoot-'em-up
"This sets a new standard for multiplayer shooters"
SCORE: 9.2



XOX. LIVE, DUTINE ENUBRED







↑ Look closely - a player is letting one rip!

Spike a stranger's ball as Xbox Live arrives at the beach

# OUTLAW VOLLEYBAL

OUTLAW VOLLEYBALL scored a mighty 8.0 in OAXM, which isn't all that far behind the otherwise aesthetically pleasing DOA Xtreme Beach Volleyball. Will it stand up to the Xbox Live test?

The fluid interplay between players is a testament to the usually lag-free pleasure of playing on Xbox Live. You'll genuinely feel like you're playing against friends on System Link. The easy going pick-up-and-play character of this game is also a big draw. There's

no need to learn complicated combos - just come to grips with the simple controls, and you'll be playing like a pro in no time. We've heard rumours of downloadable content in the guise of new outfits and new characters.

#### THE BAD

This is really a peer-to-peer type of Live game - only two Xboxes can connect with a maximum of two players (on each console) per side. It's a pity you can't partner a stranger - to play doubles you

must have a friend sitting next to you. It's a fairly minor complaint for an otherwise really enjoyable online title

#### CONCLUSION

Outlaw Volleyball brings the fun of the beach into your living room. The style of the game and limited number of players means it'll never be one of the most popular online games, but don't let that put you off enjoying what's otherwise one of the most entertaining sports titles we've seen for a while.



#### **ENHANCEMENT**

It's great fun online, but to play a doubles match you'll need a real-life partner on your team.

#### VARIETY

Plenty of varied modes means it's not just the same game over and

#### SETUP

Simple enough for even the newest of newbies to get in on the action in double-quick time.

#### LIVE RATING

This will spend more time in the Xbox than on the shelf. Options for more players would've been nice.

# OFFICIAL AUSTRALIAN XBOX MAGAZINE RATING





↑ Load screens are good for handy info.

# PIRTE REVIEW



↑ Now's not the time to go shopping!



↑ Death awaits the bold and the brave...

# Shout "Cover me!" to a middle-aged American in Kansas

# GHOST RECON: ISLAND THUNDER

THIS IS A STAND-ALONE mission disc (so you don't need the first Ghost Recon game to play it). It's a super-tense slice of guerilla warfare, optimised for play on Xbox Live for up to 16 players, and it's only \$49.95!

# **THE GOOD**

There are eight brand new multiplayer maps to skirmish in, with a much better variation of landscapes than the first game. They include battles in the city, the desert and the jungle. There

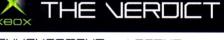
are also four top maps from the original Ghost Recon, so you won't need to go out and buy the more expensive original to get the most out of the great multiplayer experience.

The clunky front end interface that plagued the menu system in the first title rears its ugly head yet again. We're a little tired of buttons that refuse to respond to our commands instantaneously. It can also take a while to find a

game to take part in on Xbox Live, even though the matchmaker is customisable to search specifically for a set number of players or a particular gametype.

## CONCLUSION

It's more of the same but that's no bad thing. More maps, game modes, and better terrain make this instalment as vital as the first. But at \$49.95 it's more of a bargain than finding a Rolex in a car boot sale. Live subscribers should buy this game!



# ENHANCEMENT

We love hearing "Charge!" in our headsets as we leg it over the top. Ghost Recon comes alive on Live.

# VARIETY

Plenty of game modes and new maps to play on keep this shooter ahead of the chasing pack.

Simple and easy to use, but the clunky interface makes the whole menu system seem cumbersome.

# LINE RATING

It's the best squad shooter on Xbox and one of the very best games to play on Xbox Live

OFFICIAL AUSTRALIAN XBOX MAGAZINE <mark>RATING</mark>





↑ One grenade and you both go boom!

# Xbox Live - The Games WANT A GAME? An Xbox Live-enabled game? Thought so. Here's the info: what's out, what's coming out... and how Xbox Live is used to make things better.

Live is used to make things better.

# □ □ □ □ □ □ Buckling the shelves of your local games store right now...

GAME	DEVELOPER	PUBLISHER	PLAYERS ONLINE	D/L CONTENT?	ISSUE	SCORE	GAME TYPE
Brute Force	Digital Games	Microsoft	n/a	Yes	Issue 15	9.4	Squad-based shooter
Burnout 2: Point of Impact	Criterion Games	Acclaim	n/a	uploadable scores	Issue 17	8.9	Racing
Capcom Vs SNK 2 EO	Capcom	Capcom	two	No	Issue 13	9.0	Beat 'em up
Godzilla: Destroy All Monsters Melee	Atari	Atari	n/a	Yes	Issue 15	7.5	Beat 'em up
MechAssault	Microsoft	Microsoft	two - eight	Yes	Issue 09	8.0	Mech shooter
Midtown Madness 3	Dice	Microsoft	two - eight	No	Issue 18	8	Racing
MotoGP Online demo	Climax	THQ	two - sixteen	No	Demo	8.9	Racing
MotoGP 2	Climax	THQ	two - sixteen	No	Issue 17	9.4	Racing
MX Superfly	Pacific Coast P&L	THQ	n/a	Yes	Issue 13	6.5	Extreme sports
NBA2K3	Sega	Atari	two - four	No	Issue 14	9.0	US sports
NFL2K3	Sega	Atari	two - four	No	Issue 14	9.2	US sports
NFL Fever 2003	Microsoft	Microsoft	two - four	No	Issue 08	5.2	US sports
NHL2K3	Sega	Atari	two - four	No	Issue 14	7.0	US sports
Outlaw Volleyball	Hypnotix	TDK	two - four	No	Issue 21	8.0	Sports
Phantasy Star Online Episode I & II	Sonic Team	Sega	two - four	Yes	Issue 17	8.8	MMORPG
Return to Castle Wolfenstein	Nerve Software/id	Activision	two - sixteen	No	Issue 15	9.2	Shooter
Soldier of Fortune II	Gratuitous Games	Activision	two - twelve	Yes	Issue 17	7.8	Shooter
Star Wars: Knights of the Old Republic	BioWare	Activision	n/a	Yes	Issue 20	9.5	RPG
Star Wars: The Clone Wars	LucasArts	LucasArts	two - eight	No	Issue 18	8	Action
ToeJam & Earl III: Mission to Earth	Sega	Microsoft	n/a	Yes	Issue 12	6.0	Platformer
Tom Clancy's Ghost Recon	Red Storm Ent.	Ubi Soft	two - sixteen	No	Issue 09	8.3	Squad-based shoote
Tom Clancy's Ghost Recon: Island Thunder	Ubi Soft	Ubi Soft	two - sixteen	No	Issue 21	8.5	Squad-based shoote
Tom Clancy's Splinter Cell	Ubi Soft	Ubi Soft	n/a	Yes	Issue 08	9.7	Action adventure
Whacked!	Microsoft	Microsoft	two - four	No	Issue 11	4.0	Party
Unreal Championship	Digital Extremes	Atari	two - sixteen	Yes	Issue 10	9.2	Shooter

# **COMING SOON** Talented folk are programming this lot at the mo

## GAME

Amped 2 Armed & Dangerous Black9 Colin McRae Rally 04 Conker: Live & Uncut Counter-Strike Dead Man's Hand

ESPN: NHL, NFL, NBA, NCAA Ford Racing 2 Full Spectrum Warrior

Halo 2 Hunter the Reckoning: Redeemer

Jade Empire Links 2004

LMA Manager 2004 Men of Valor: The Vietnam War

Music Mixer

NFL Fever 2004 NHL Rivals 2004

Operation Flashpoint Project Gotham Racing 2

Run Like Hell Secret Weapons Over Normandy

Sega GT Online Serious Sam 2

Shadow Ops: Red Mercury Steel Battalion Conflict StarCraft: Ghost

Star Wars Jedi Knight: Jedi Academy SWAT: Global Strike Team Tenchu: Return from Darkness Tom Clancy's Rainbow Six 3

Top Spin Unreal II: The Awakening







	LLOI LIX
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Plan	net Moon Studios
Maj	esco
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CONTRACTOR	rosoft
	talus
Ubi	Montreal

DEVELOPER

Activision
Majesco
Codemasters
Microsoft
Vivendi
Atari
Sega
Empire
THQ
Microsoft
Virgin Interactive
Microsoft
Microsoft
Codemasters
Vivendi
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Codemasters
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Virgin Interactive
Activision
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Take Two
Atari
Microsoft
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Activision
Vivendi
Activision Ubi Soft
Microsoft

PUBLISHER

Microsoft

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	Action
	Racing
	Action
	Squad-based shooter
	FPS
	US sports
	Racing
	Tactical action
	Shooter
tive	Action
	RPG
	Sports
	Sports
	Shooter
	Music
	US sports
	US sports
	Squad-based shooter
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	Action
	Racing
	Shooter
	First-person shooter
	Mech shooter
	Action-adventure
	FPS
	FPS
	Stealth action
	Squad-based shooter
	Sports
	Shooter
	Shooter

**GAME TYPE** 

Extreme sports

Spring 2003	
Spring 2003	
Spring 2003	
TBC	
Spring 2003	
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Spring 2003	
Spring2003	
Early 2004	
2004	
Spring 2003	
Nov 2004	
Spring 2003	
Spring 2003	
Winter 2004	
Christmas 20	003
Nov 2003	
Spring 2003	
Spring 2003	
Late 2003	
Spring 2003	
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Spring 2004	
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March 2004	
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Spring 2003	

RELEASE DATE

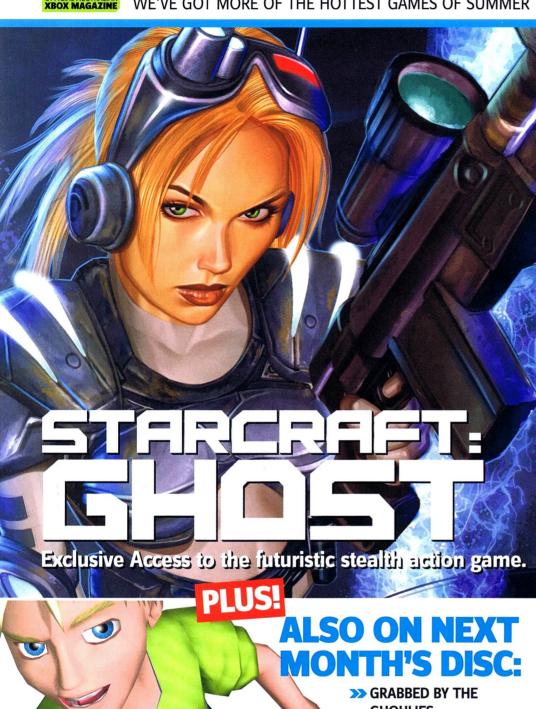
Spring 2003



# **NEXT MONT**

in OFFICIAL AUSTRALIAN XBOX MAGAZINE

WE'VE GOT MORE OF THE HOTTEST GAMES OF SUMMER



- **GHOULIES**
- >>> BUFFY 2: CHAOS BLEEDS
- >>> ARMED AND DANGEROUS
- >>> WRATH UNLEASHED
- >> ...AND LOADS MORE!

**OFFICIAL AUSTRALIAN XBOX MAGAZINE ISSUE 23** 

TURN TO PAGE 056 TO SECURE YOUR COPY NOW!

All magazine and disc contents are subject to change.



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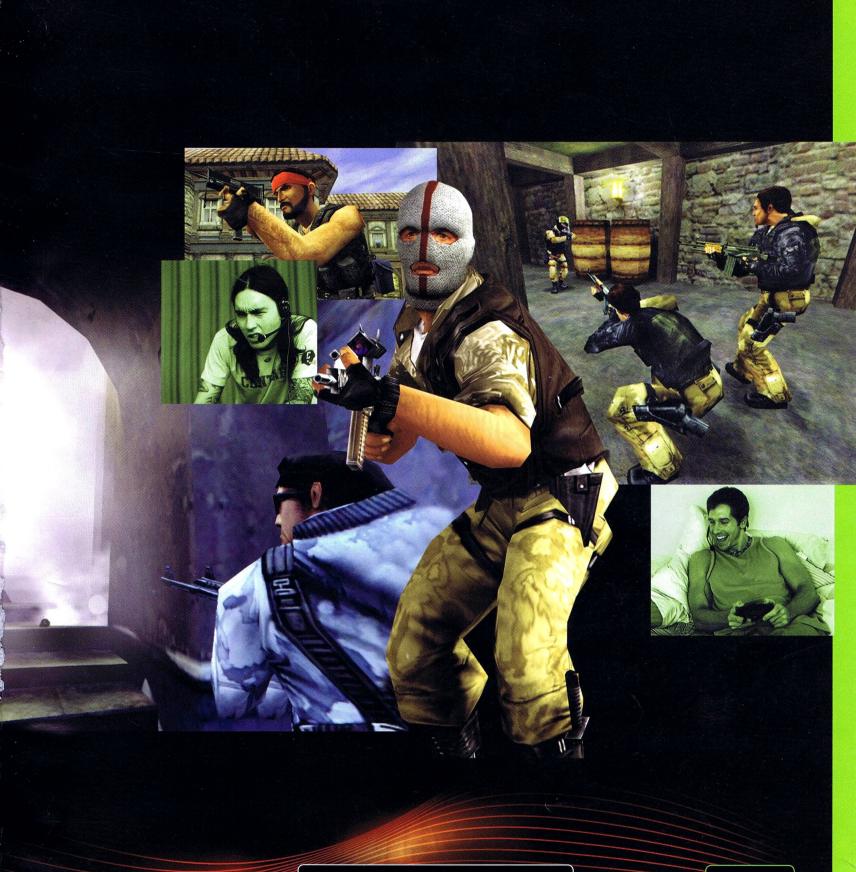
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